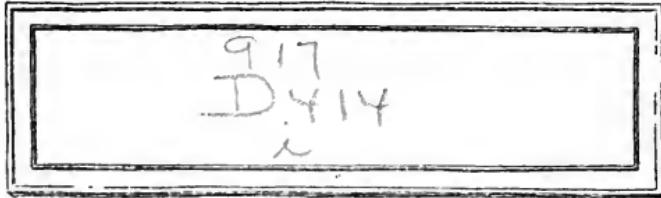
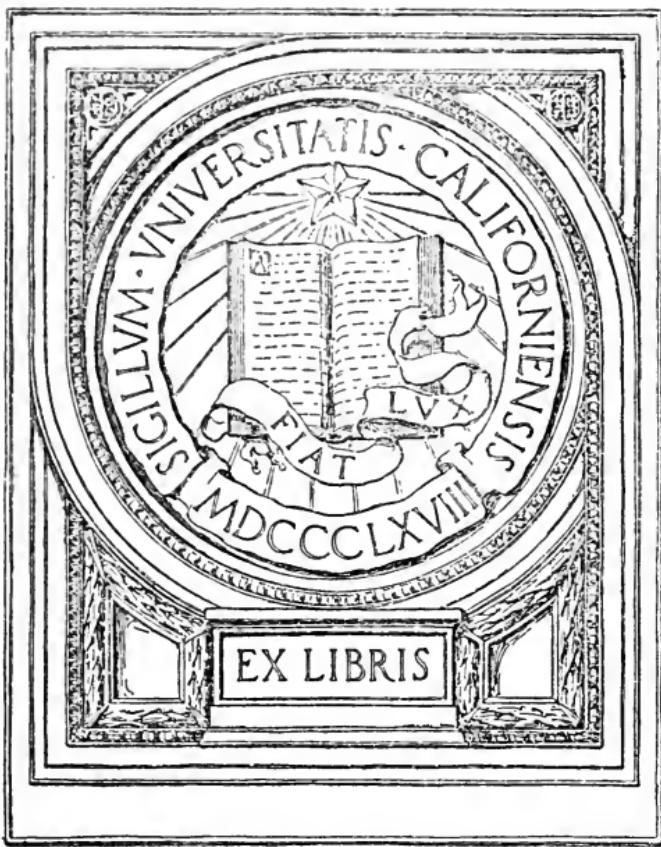


INNOCENCE
AND
DEATH





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INNOCENCE AND DEATH



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BY

M. V. DENT

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TO
DORA

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EPITAPH
ON AN INFANT
14th JULY—1st AUGUST 1870

OUR little lamb He lent awhile,
Pure as Himself from stain ;
Then said, “ My kingdom is of such,”
And call’d it home again.

F. T. PALGRAVE



“THESE are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”—REV. xiv.



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PREFACE

IN the whole gamut of human suffering there is no sorrow so poignant as the death of a little child. The voice of Rachel weeping for her children comes down to us through the ages, and the cry is as bitter now as it was then. There is a certain sad comfort in the fellowship of grief, and the following extracts in verse and prose may, I hope, be of some value to sorrowing mothers.

INNOCENCE AND DEATH

AND Nathan departed unto his house. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

David therefore besought God for the child ; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.

And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth : but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead : for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice : how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead ?

But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead : therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead ? and they said, He is dead.

Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and wor-

shipped : then he came to his own house ; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done ? Thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive ; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.

And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept : for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live ?

But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast ? can I bring him back again ? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

2 SAMUEL xii. 15-23

OF HIS DEAR SON, GERVASE

DEAR Lord, receive my son, whose winning
love
To me was like a friendship, far above
The course of nature or his tender age ;
Whose looks could all my bitter griefs assuage :
Let his pure soul, ordain'd seven years to be
In that frail body which was part of me,
Remain my pledge in Heaven, as sent to show
How to this port at every step I go.

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT

ON A DEAD CHILD

PERFECT little body, without fault or stain
on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full and
fair!

Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile
remain on thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou ;—alas ! no
longer

To visit her heart with wondrous joy ; to be

Thy father's pride :—ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength
make stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond ;

Startling my fancy fond
With a chance attitude of thy head, a freak of
beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and
holds it :

But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heart-
breaking and stiff ;

Yet feels to my hand as if
'Twas thy will, thy pleasure and trust that en-
folds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing,—
Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little
bed!—

Propping thy wise, sad head,
Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet! doth the change content thee?—Death,
whither hath he taken thee?

To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster
of this?

The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm
thee and awaken thee?

Ah! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the
dark,

Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known
and have heard of, fail us.

ROBERT BRIDGES

IT was not, however, destined that she and her child should inhabit that little garret. We were to leave our lodgings on Monday morning; but on Saturday evening the child was seized with convulsions, and all Sunday the mother watched and prayed for it: but it pleased God

to take the innocent infant from us, and on Sunday, at midnight, it lay a corpse in its mother's bosom. Amen. We have other children, happy and well, now round about us, and from the father's heart the memory of this little thing has almost faded ; but I do believe that every day of her life the mother thinks of the firstborn that was with her for so short a while : many and many a time has she taken her daughters to the grave, in Saint Bride's, where he lies buried ; and she wears still at her neck a little, little lock of gold hair, which she took from the head of the infant, as he lay smiling in his coffin. It has happened to me to forget the child's birthday, but to her never ; and often, in the midst of common talk, comes something that shows she is thinking of the child still,—some simple allusion that is to me inexpressibly touching.

From "The Great Hoggarty Diamond"

W. M. THACKERAY

ON MY FIRST SON

FAREWELL, thou child of my right hand,
and joy ;
My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy :
Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.

O, could I lose all father, now ! for why,
Will man lament the state he should envy ?
To have so soon 'scaped world's, and flesh's rage,
And, if no other misery, yet age !
Rest in soft peace, and ask'd say here doth lie
Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry :
For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such,
As what he loves may never like too much.

BEN JONSON

ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER

H ERE lies, to each her parents' ruth,
Mary, the daughter of their youth ;
Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,
It makes the father less to rue.
At six months' end she parted hence
With safety of her innocence ;
Whose soul heaven's Queen, whose name she
bears,
In comfort of her mother's tears,
Hath placed amongst her virgin-train ;
Where while that, severed, doth remain,
This grave partakes the fleshly birth ;
Which cover lightly, gentle earth !

BEN JONSON

IN MEMORIAM

LITTLE eyes that scarce did see,
 Little lips that never smiled ;
 Alas ! my little dear dead child,
 Death is thy Father and not me,
 I but embraced thee, soon as he.

THOMAS HOOD

Constance. He talks to me that never had a son.

K. Philip. You are as fond of grief as of your child.

Constance. Grief fills the room up of my absent child,

Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
 Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
 Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
 Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form ;
 Then, have I reason to be fond of grief ?

Fare you well ; had you such loss as I,
 I could give better comfort than you do.

I will not keep this form upon my head,
 When there is such disorder in my wit.

O Lord ! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son !
 My life, my joy, my food, my all the world !
 My widow-comfort, and my sorrow's cure !

“ King John,” iii. 4

SHAKESPEARE

FROM THE DIARY OF JOHN EVELYN

Jan. 27, 1657–58. After six fits of a quartan ague with which it pleased God to visit him, died my deare Son Richard, to our inexpressible griefe an affliction, 5 yeares and 3 days old only, but at that tender age a prodigy for witt and understanding; for beauty of body a very angel; for endowment of mind of incredible and rare hopes. To give only a little taste of them, and thereby glory to God, who out of the mouths of babes and infants does sometimes perfect his praises: at 2 years and a halfe old he could perfectly reade any of y^e English, Latine, French, or Gotic letters, pronouncing the three first languages exactly. He had before the 5th yeare, not only skill to read most written hands, but to decline all the nouns, conjugate the verbs regular, and most of y^e irregular; learn'd out “Puerilis,” got by heart almost y^e entire vocabularie of Latine and French primitives and words, could make congruous syntax, turne English into Latine, and vice versa, construe and prove what he read, and did the government and use of relatives, verbs, substantives, elipses, and many figures and tropes, and made a considerable progress in Comenius's Janua; began himselfe to write legibly, and had a strong passion for Greeke. The number of verses he could recite was prodigious, and what he remember'd of the parts of Playes, which he

would also act ; and when seeing a Plautus in one's hand, he ask'd what booke it was, and being told it was comedy, and too difficult for him, he wept for sorrow. Strange was his apt and ingenious application of fables and morals, for he had read Œsop ; he had a wonderful disposition to mathematics, having by heart divers propositions of Euclid that were read to him in play, and he would make lines and demonstrate them. As to his piety, astonishing were his applications of Scripture upon occasion, and his sense of God ; he had learnt all his catechisme early, and understood y^e historical part of y^e Bible and New Testament to a wonder, how Christ came to redeeme mankind, and how comprehending these necessarys himselfe, his god-fathers were discharg'd of their promise. These and the like illuminations, far exceeding his age and experience, considering the prettinesse of his addresse and behaviour, cannot but leave impressions in me at the memory of him. When one told him how many days a Quaker had fasted, he replied that was no wonder, for Christ had said that man should not live by bread alone, but by y^e Word of God. He would of himselfe select y^e most pathetic psalms, and chapters out of Job, to read to his mayde during his sicknesse, telling her when she pitied him, that all God's children must suffer affliction. He declaim'd against y^e vanities of the world before he had seene any. Often he would desire those who came to see him

to pray by him, and a yeare before he fell sick, to kneel and pray with him alone in some corner. How thankfully would he receive admonition, how soone be reconciled! how indifferent yet continually cheerful! He would give grave advice to his Brother John, beare with his impertinencies, and say he was but a child. If he heard or saw any new thing, he was unquiet till he was told how it was made; he brought to us all such difficulties as he found in books, to be expounded. He had learn'd by heart divers sentences in Latin and Greeke, which on occasion he would produce even to wonder. He was all life, all prettiness, far from morose, sullen, or childish in any thing he said or did. The last time he had been at church (^{w^{ch}} was at Greenwich), I ask'd him, according to custome, what he remembered of y^e sermon; two good things, Father, said he, bonum gratiae and bonum gloriae, with a just account of what y^e preacher said. The day before he died he call'd to me, and in a more serious manner than usual, told me that for all I loved him so dearly I should give my house, land, and all my fine things, to his Brother Jack, he should have none of them; and next morning when he found himself ill, and that I persuaded him to keepe his hands in bed, he demanded whether he might pray to God with his hands un-joyn'd; and a little after, whilst in greate agonie, whether he should not offend God by using his holy name so often calling for

THE DIARY OF JOHN EVELYN 11

ease. What shall I say of his frequent pathetical ejaculations utter'd of himselfe: "Sweete Jesus save me, deliver me, pardon my sinns, let thine angels receive me!" So early knowledge, so much piety and perfection! But thus God having dress'd up a Saint fit for himselfe, would not longer permit him with us, unworthy of y^e future fruites of this incomparable hopefull blossome. Such a child I never saw: for such a child I blesse God in whose bosome he is! May I and mine become as this little child, who now follows the Child Jesus that Lamb of God in a white robe whithersoever He goes; even so, Lord Jesus, fiat Voluntas tuam! Thou gavest him to us, Thou hast taken him from us, blessed be y^e Name of y^e Lord! That I had any thing acceptable to Thee was from thy grace alone, since from me he had nothing but sin, but that Thou hast pardon'd! blessed be my God for ever, Amen!

In my opinion he was suffocated by y^e women and maids that tended him, and cover'd him too hot with blankets as he lay in a cradle, near an excessive hot fire in a close roome. I suffer'd him to be open'd, when they found that he was what is vulgarly call'd liver growne. I caused his body to be coffin'd in lead, and reposed on the 30th at 8 o'clock that night in the church at Deptford, accompanied with divers of my relations and neighbours, among whom I distributed rings with this motto: "Dominus abstulit"; intend-

ing, God willing, to have him transported with my own body to be interr'd in our dormitory in Wotton Church, in my dear Native County of Surrey, and to lay my bones and mingle my dust with my fathers, if God be gracious to me and make me as fit for there as this blessed Child was. The Lord Jesus sanctify this and all other my afflictions, Amen !

Here ends the joy of my life, and for which I go even mourning to the grave.

A BABY'S DEATH

I

A LITTLE soul scarce fledged for earth
Takes wing with heaven again for goal
Even while we hailed as fresh from birth
A little soul.

Our thoughts ring sad as bells that toll,
Not knowing beyond this blind world's girth
What things are writ in heaven's full scroll.

Our fruitfulness is there but dearth,
And all things held in time's control
Seem there, perchance, ill dreams, not worth
A little soul.

II

The little feet that never trod
Earth, never strayed in field or street,
What hand leads upward back to God
The little feet?

A rose in June's most honied heat,
When life makes keen the kindling sod,
Was not so soft and warm and sweet.

Their pilgrimage's period
A few swift moons have seen complete
Since mother's hands first clasped and shod
The little feet.

III

The little hands that never sought
Earth's prizes, worthless all as sands,
What gift has death, God's servant, brought
The little hands?

We ask: but love's self silent stands,
Love, that lends eyes and wings to thought
To search where death's dim heaven expands.

Ere this, perchance though love know nought,
Flowers fill them, grown in lovelier lands,
Where hands of guiding angels caught
The little hands.

IV

The little eyes that never knew
Light other than of dawning skies,
What new life now lights up anew
The little eyes ?

Who knows but on their sleep may rise
Such light as never heaven let through
To lighten earth from Paradise ?

No storm, we know, may change the blue
Soft heaven that haply death descries ;
No tears, like these in ours, bedew
The little eyes.

V

Was life so strange, so sad the sky,
So strait the wide world's range,
He would not stay to wonder why
Was life so strange ?

Was earth's fair house a joyless grange
Beside that house on high
Whence Time that bore him failed to estrange ?

That here at once his soul put by
All gifts of time and change,
And left us heavier hearts to sigh
“ Was life so strange ? ”

Angel by name love called him, seeing so fair
The sweet small frame;
Meet to be called, if ever man's child were,
Angel by name.

Rose-bright and warm from Heaven's own heart
he came,
And might not bear
The cloud that covers earth's wan face with
shame.

His little light of life was all too rare
And soft a flame:
Heaven yearned for him till angels hailed him
there
Angel by name.

The song that smiled upon his birthday here
Weeps on the grave that holds him undefiled
Whose loss makes bitterer than a soundless tear
The song that smiled.

His name crowned once the mightiest ever styled
Sovereign of arts, and angel: fate and fear
Knew then their master, and were reconciled.

But we saw born beneath some tenderer sphere
 Michael, an angel and a little child,
 Whose loss bows down to weep upon his bier
 The song that smiled.

From a "Century of Roundels"

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

IN MEMORIAM F. A. S.

YET, O, Stricken heart, remember, O remember
 How of human days he lived the better part.
 April came to bloom and never dim December
 Breathed its killing chills upon the head or heart.

Doomed to know not Winter, only Spring, a being
 Trod the flowery April blithely for a while,
 Took his fill of music, joy of thought and seeing,
 Came and stayed and went, nor ever ceased to smile.

Came and stayed and went, and now when all is
 finished,
 You alone have crossed the melancholy stream,
 Yours the pang, but his, O his, the undiminished
 Undecaying gladness, undeparted dream.

All that life contains of torture, toil, and treason,
 Shame, dishonour, death, to him were but a name,
 Here, a boy, he dwelt through all the singing
 season

And ere the day of sorrow departed as he came.

From "Underwoods"

R. L. STEVENSON

DEAD THIS TWENTY YEARS

IN the lustiness of youth there are many who cannot feel that they too will die. The first fear stops the heart. Even then they would keep death at arm's length by making believe to disown him. Loved ones are taken away, and the boy, the girl, will not speak of them, as if that made the conqueror's triumph the less. In time the fire in the breast burns low, and then in the last glow of the embers, it is sweeter to hold to what has been than to think of what may be.

Twenty years had passed since Joey ran down the brae to play. Jess, his mother, shook her staff fondly at him. A cart rumbled by, the driver nodding on the shaft. It rounded the corner and stopped suddenly, and then a woman screamed, a handful of men carried Joey's dead body to his mother, and that was the tragedy of Jess's life. Twenty years ago, and still Jess sat at the window, and still she heard that woman scream. Every other living being had forgotten Joey; even to Hendry he was now scarcely a name, but there were times when Jess's face quivered and her old arms went out for her dead boy.

"God's will be done," she said, "but oh, I grudged Him my bairn terrible sair. I dinna want him back noo, an' ilka day is takkin' me

nearer to him, but for mony a lang year I grudged him sair, sair. He was just five minutes gone, an' they brocht him back deid, my Joey."

On the Sabbath day Jess could not go to church, and it was then, I think, that she was with Joey most. There was often a blessed serenity on her face when we returned, that only comes to those who have risen from their knees with their prayers answered. Then she was very close to the boy who died. Long ago she could not look out from her window upon the brae, but now it was her seat in church. There on the Sabbath evenings she sometimes talked to me of Joey.

"It's been a fine day," she would say, "juist like that day. I thank the Lord for the sunshine noo, but oh, I thocht at the time I couldna look at the sun shinin' again."

.

"Guid is no word for what Jamie has been to me, but he wasna born till after Joey died. When we got Jamie, Hendry took to whistlin' again at the loom, an' Jamie juist filled Joey's place to him. Ay, but naebody could fill Joey's place to me. It's different to a man. A bairn's no the same to him, but a fell bit o' me was buried in my laddie's grave.

"Jamie and Joey was never nane the same nature. It was aye something in a shop Jamie wanted to be, an' he never cared muckle for his

books, but Joey hankered after being a minister, young as he was, an' a minister Hendry an' me would hae done our best to mak' him. Mony, mony a time after he came in frae the Kirk on the Sabbath he would stand up at this very window and wave his hands in a reverent way, juist like the minister. His first text was to be 'Thou God seest me.'

"Ye'll wonder at me, but I've sat here in the lang fore-nichts dreamin' 'at Joey was a grown man noo, an' 'at I was puttin' on my bonnet to come to the kirk to hear him preach. Even as far back as twenty years an' mair I wasna able to gang aboot, but Joey would say to me, 'We'll get a carriage to ye, mother, so 'at ye can come and hear me preach on 'Thou God seest me.'" He would say to me, 'It doesna do, mother, for the minister in the pulpit to nod to ony o' the fowk, but I'll gie ye a look an' ye'll ken it's me.' Oh, Joey, I would hae gien ye a look too, an' ye would hae kent what I was thinkin'. He often said, 'Ye'll be proud o' me, will ye no, mother, when ye see me comin' sailin' alang to the pulpit in my gown?' So I would hae been proud o' him, an' I was proud to hear him speakin' o' t. 'The other fowk,' he said, 'will be sittin' in their seats wonderin' what my text's to be, but you'll ken, mother, an' you'll turn up to "Thou God seest me," afore I gie oot the chapter.' Ay, but that day he was coffined, for all the minister prayed, I found it hard to say, 'Thou God seest

me.' It's the text I like best noo, though, an' when Hendry an' Leebey is at the Kirk, I turn't up often, often in the Bible. I read frae the beginnin' o' the chapter, but when I come to 'Thou God seest me,' I stop. Na, it's no' 'at there's ony rebellion to the Lord in my heart noo, for I ken He was lookin' doon when the cart gaed ower Joey, an' He wanted to tak' my laddie to Himsel'. But juist when I come to, 'Thou God seest me,' I let the Book lie in my lap, for aince a body's sure o' that they're sure of all. Ay, ye'll laugh, but I think, mebbe juist because I was his mother, 'at though Joey never lived to preach in a kirk, he's preached frae 'Thou God seest me' to me. I dinna ken 'at I would ever hae been sae sure o' that if it hadna been for him, an' so I think I see him sailin' doon to the pulpit juist as he said he would do. I see him gien me the look he spoke o'—ay, he looks my wy first, an' I ken it's him. Naebody sees him but me, but I see him gien me the look he promised. He's so terrible near me, an' him dead, 'at when my time comes I'll be rale willin' to go. I dinna say that to Jamie, because he all trembles ; but I'm auld noo, an' I'm no nane loth to gang."

From "A Window in Thrums"

J. M. BARRIE

THE BURIAL OF AN INFANT

BLEST infant bud, whose blossom-life
 Did only look about, and fall
 Wearied out in a harmless strife
 Of tears, and milk, the food of all!

Sweetly didst thou expire : thy soul
 Flew home unstain'd by his new skin ;
 For ere thou knew'st how to be foul,
 Death wean'd thee from the world, and sin.

Softly rest all thy virgin-crumbs !
 Lapp'd in the sweets of thy young breath,
 Expecting till thy Saviour comes
 To dress them, and unswaddle death !

HENRY VAUGHAN

ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON
 AS BORN¹

ISAW where in the shroud did lurk
 A curious frame of Nature's work ;
 A floweret crush'd in the bud,
 A nameless piece of Babyhood,
 Was in her cradle-coffin lying ;
 Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying :

¹ Refers to an infant daughter of the poet, Thomas Hood, who died a few hours after her birth.

So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb !
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark ; ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below ?
Shall we say that Nature blind
Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finish'd pattern without fault ?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lack'd she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)
That should thy little limbs have quicken'd ?
Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure
Life of health, and days mature :
Woman's self in miniature !
Limbs so fair, they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That babe or mother, one must die ;
So in mercy left the stock
And cut the branch ; to save the shock
Of young years widow'd, and the pain
When single state comes back again
To the lone man who, reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimèd life ?

The economy of Heaven is dark,
And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark,
Why human buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral
That has his day ; while shrivell'd crones
Stiffen with age to stock and stones ;
And crabbèd use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss :
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells, and baby clothes ;
Coral redder than those lips
Which pale death did late eclipse ;
Music framed for infants' glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee ;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing ; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave,
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie—
A more harmless vanity ?

CHARLES LAMB

. . . THERE are griefs so gentle in their
very nature, that it would be worse
than false heroism to refuse them a tear. Of this

kind are the death of infants. Particular circumstances may render it more or less advisable to indulge in grief for the loss of a little child; but, in general, parents should be no more advised to repress their tears on such an occasion than to repress their smiles towards a child surviving, or to indulge in any other sympathy. It is an appeal to the same gentle tenderness; and such appeals are never made in vain. The end of them is an acquittal from the harsher bonds of affliction;—from the tying down of the spirit to one melancholy idea.

. . . The remembered innocence and endearments of a child stand us instead of virtues that have died older. Children have not exercised the voluntary offices of friendship; they have not chosen to be kind and good to us; nor stood by us, from conscious will, in the hour of adversity. But they have shared their pleasures and pains with us as well as they could: the interchange of good offices between us has, of necessity, been less mingled with the troubles of the world; the sorrow arising from their death is the only one which we can associate with their memories. These are happy thoughts that cannot die. Our loss may always render them pensive; but they will not always be painful. It is a part of the benignity of Nature, that pain does not survive like pleasure, at any time; much less where the cause of it is an innocent one. The smile will remain reflected by memory; as the

moon reflects the light upon us, when the sun has gone into heaven.

Now the liability to the loss of children,—or rather what renders us sensible of it, the occasional loss itself,—seems to be one of these necessary bitters thrown into the cup of humanity. We do not mean that every one must lose one of his children in order to enjoy the rest; or that every individual loss affects us in the same proportion. We allude to the deaths of infants in general. These might be as few as we could render them. But if none at all ever took place, we should regard every little child as a man or woman secured; and it will be easily conceived, what a world of endearing cares and hopes this security would endanger. The very idea of infancy would lose its continuity with us. Girls and boys would be future men and women, not present children. They would have attained their full growth in our imaginations, and might as well have been men and women at once. On the other hand, those who have lost an infant are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who, in one sense, retain it always; and they furnish their neighbours with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child. Death has arrested it with his kindly harshness,

and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence.

Of such as these are the pleasantest shapes that visit our fancy and our hopes. They are the ever-smiling emblems of joy ; the prettiest pages that wait upon imagination. Lastly, "of these are the kingdom of heaven." Wherever there is a province of the benevolent and all-accessible empire, whether on earth or elsewhere, such are the gentle spirits that must inhabit it. To such simplicity, or the resemblance of it, must they come. Such must be the ready confidence of their hearts, and creativeness of their fancy. And so ignorant must they be of the "knowledge of good and evil," losing their discernment of that self-created trouble by enjoying the garden before them, and not being ashamed of what is kindly and innocent.

From an Essay on the "Deaths of Little Children" LEIGH HUNT

SIX months to six years added he remained
Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained :
O blessed Lord ! whose mercy then removed
A child whom every eye that looked on loved ;
Support us, teach us calmly to resign
What we possessed, and now is wholly Thine !

W. WORDSWORTH

BUT the first that ever I bare was dead before
he was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and
thorn.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought
of death.

There lay the sweet little body that never had
drawn a breath.

I had not wept, little Annie, not since I had been
a wife;

But I wept like a child that day, for the babe
had fought for his life.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger
or pain:

I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had
all been in vain.

For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another
morn;

But I wept like a child for the child that was
dead before he was born.

From "The Grandmother"

ALFRED TENNYSON

EPITAPH¹

(Translated from the Latin)

TO the gods of the Shades
 To Simplicia Florentina
 A most innocent thing.
 Who lived 10 months
 Her Father of the vi Legion
 The victorious made this.

ONLY A CURL

FRIENDS of faces unknown and a land
 Unvisited over the sea,
 Who tell me how lonely you stand
 With a single gold curl in the hand
 Held up to be looked at by me,—

While you ask me to ponder and say
 What a father and mother can do,
 With the bright fellow-locks put away
 Out of reach, beyond kiss, in the clay
 Where the violets press nearer than you :

Shall I speak like a poet, or run
 Into weak woman's tears for relief?
 Oh, children ! I never lost one,—
 Yet my arm's round my own little son,
 And Love knows the secret of Grief.

¹ Found on a tomb left by the Roman army of occupation in Britain.

And I feel what it must be and is,
When God draws a new angel so
Through the house of a man up to His,
With a murmur of music, you miss,
And a rapture of light, you forgo.

How you think, staring on at the door,
Where the face of your angel flashed in,
That its brightness, familiar before,
Burns off from you ever the more
For the dark of your sorrow and sin.

“God lent him and takes him,” you sigh ;
—Nay, there let me break with your pain :
God’s generous in giving, say I,—
And the thing which He gives, I deny
That He ever can take back again.

He gives what He gives. I appeal
To all who bear babes—in the hour
When the veil of the body we feel
Rent round us,—while torments reveal
The motherhood’s advent in power,

And the babe cries !—has each of us known
By apocalypse (God being there
Full in nature) the child is our own,
Life of life, love of love, moan of moan,
Through all changes, all times, everywhere.

He’s ours and for ever. Believe,
O Father !—O Mother, look back
To the first love’s assurance ! To give

Means with God not to tempt or deceive
With a cup thrust in Benjamin's sack.

He gives what He gives. Be content!
He resumes nothing given,—be sure!
God had? Where the usurers lent
In His temple, indignant He went
And scourged away all those impure.

He lends not; but gives to the end,
As He loves to the end. If it seem
That He draws back a gift, comprehend
'Tis to add to it rather,—amend,
And finish it up to your dream,—

Or keep,—as a mother will toys
Too costly, tho' given by herself,
Till the room shall be stiller from noise,
And the children more fit for such joys,
Kept over their heads on the shelf.

So look up, friends! You, who indeed
Have possessed in your house a sweet piece
Of the Heaven which men strive for, must need
Be more earnest than others are,—speed
Where they loiter, persist where they cease.

You know how one angel smiles there,
Then weep not. 'Tis easy for you
To be drawn by a single gold hair
Of that curl, from earth's storm and despair,
To the safe place above us. Adieu.

E. B. BROWNING

EPITAPH ON A CHILD THAT DIED

H ERE she lies, a pretty bud,
Lately made of flesh and blood :
Who as soon fell fast asleep
As her little eyes did peep.
Give her strewings, but not stir
The earth that lightly covers her.

ROBERT HERRICK

SUCH was the manner of her death, as bred a kind of admiration in us all that were present to behold it. For whereas the new-tuned organs of speech, by reason of her great and wearisome sickness, had been so greatly weakened, that for the space of twelve or fourteen hours at least, there was no sound of any word breaking from her lips; yet when it sensibly appeared that she would soon make a peaceable end of a troublesome life, she sighed out these words, "I go, I go;" and when, not long after, there was something to be ministered unto her by those that attended her in the time of her sickness, fastening her eye upon them with a constant look, she repeated, "Away, I go!" and yet a third time, almost immediately before she offered herself, a sweet virgin sacrifice, unto Him that made her, faintly cried, "I go, . I go." . . . And whereas she had used many

other words in the time of her extremity, yet now, at the last, she did aptly utter these, and none but these."

From a Funeral Sermon for the Princess Mary
(daughter of James I) by J. LEECH,
preached in Henry VII's Chapel. Sept.
23, 1607

CRUEL FATE

(FROM THE GREEK OF PHILIPPUS)

CHILDREN three I bore, my own,
Hapless Mother, hapless me,
Bore them for the grave alone,
Woe for me, Philaenion !
Yet a hope had I to see
Play beside me, glad and free,
One child of another's womb ;
One whom I might call a son,
Woe for me, Philaenion !
Who have reared him for the tomb,
God would grant me not this other,
Not the name of Foster-Mother,
Fatal name, for he is gone !
Woe is me, Philaenion !

ANDREW LANG

BEREAVED

LET me come in where you sit weeping—aye
 Let me who have not any child to die
 Weep with you ; for the little one whose love
 I have known nothing of.

The little arms that slowly, slowly loosed
 Their pressure round your neck ; the hands you
 used
 To kiss. Such arms—such hands I never knew.
 May I not weep with you ?

Fain would I be of service—say something
 Between the tears, that would be comforting,—
 But ah ! so sadder than yourselves am I,
 Who have no child to die.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

With what truth I may say “ Roma ! Roma !
 Roma ! Non è piu come era prima ! ”

MY lost William, thou in whom
 Some bright spirit lived, and did
 That decaying robe consume
 Which its lustre faintly hid.
 Here its ashes find a tomb,
 But beneath this pyramid

Thou art not—if a thing divine
 Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine
 Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child ?
 Let me think thy spirit feeds,
 With its life intense and mild,
 The love of living leaves and weeds,
 Among these tombs and ruins wild ;—
 Let me think that through low seeds
 Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,
 Into their hues and scents may pass,
 A portion.

June 1819

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

LOVE COMFORTLESS

THE child is in the night and rain
 On whom no tenderest wind might
 blow,
 And out alone in a hurricane.
 Ah, no,
 The Child is safe in Paradise !

The snow is on his gentle head,
 His little feet are in the snow,
 Oh, very cold is his small bed !
 Ah, no,
 Lift up your heart, lift up your eyes !

Over the fields and out of sight,
 Beside the lonely river's flow,
 Lieth the child this bitter night.

Ah, no,

The child sleeps under Mary's eyes !

What wandering lamb cries sore distressed,
 Whilst I with fire and comfort go ?
 Oh, let me warm him in my breast !

Ah, no,

'Tis warm in God's lit nurseries.

KATHERINE TYNAN-HINKSON

EPITAPH IN ST. CLEMENT DANES

I NTO this world, as stranger to an Inn
 This child came, guest-wise,
 Where, when it had been
 Awhile and found nought worthy of his stay
 He only broke his fast and went away.

C HILD of a day, thou knowest not
 The tears that overflow thine urn,
 The gushing eyes that read thy lot,
 Nor, if thou knewst, couldst return !

And why the wish ! the pure and blest
 Watch, like thy mother, o'er thy sleep ;
 O peaceful night ! O envied rest !
 Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

W. S. LANDOR

THRENODIA

GONE, gone from us ! and shall we see
Those sibyl-leaves of destiny,
Those calm eyes, never more ?
These deep, dark eyes so warm and bright,
Wherein the fortunes of the man
Lay slumbering in prophetic light,
In characters a child might scan ?
So bright, and gone forth utterly !
O stern word—Nevermore !

The stars of those two gentle eyes
Will shine no more on earth ;
Quenched are the hopes that had their birth,
As we watched them slowly rise,
Stars of a mother's fate ;
And she would read them o'er and o'er,
Pondering, as she sate,
Over their dear astrology,
Which she had conned and conned before,
Deeming she needs must read aright
What was writ so passing bright.
And yet, alas ! she knew not why,
Her voice would falter in its song,
And tears would slide from out her eye,
Silent, as they were doing wrong.
O stern word—Nevermore !

The tongue that scarce had learned to claim
An entrance to a mother's heart

By that dear talisman, a mother's name,
Sleeps all forgetful of its art !
I loved to see the infant soul
(How mighty in the weakness
Of its untutored meekness !)
Peep timidly from out its nest,
His lips, the while,
Fluttering with half-fledged words,
Or hushing to a smile
That more than words expressed,
When his glad mother on him stole
And snatched him to her breast !
O, thoughts were brooding in those eyes,
That would have soared like strong-winged birds
Far, far into the skies,
Gladding the earth with song,
And gushing harmonies,
Had he but tarried with us long !
O stern word—Nevermore !

How peacefully they rest,
Crossfolded there
Upon his little breast,
Those small, white hands that ne'er were still
before,
But ever sported with his mother's hair,
Or the plain cross that on her breast she wore !
Her heart no more will beat
To feel the touch of that soft palm,
That ever seemed a new surprise,
Sending glad thoughts up to her eyes

To bless him with their holy calm,—
Sweet thoughts ! they made her eyes as sweet.
How quiet are the hands
That wove those pleasant bands !
But that they do not rise and sink
With his calm breathing, I should think
That he were dropped asleep.
Alas ! too deep, too deep
Is this his slumber !
Time scarce can number
The years ere he shall wake again.
O may we see his eyelids open then !
O stern word—Nevermore !

As the airy gossamere,
Floating in the sunlight clear,
Where e'er it toucheth clingeth tightly,
Round glossy leaf or stump unsightly,
So from his spirit wandered out
Tendrils spreading all about,
Knitting all things to its thrall
With a perfect love of all :
O stern word—Nevermore !

He did but float a little way
Adown the stream of time,
With dreamy eyes watching the ripples play,
Or hearkening their fairy chime ;
His slender sail
Ne'er felt the gale ;
He did but float a little way,

And, putting to the shore,
While yet 'twas early day,
Went calmly on his way,
To dwell with us no more !
No jarring did he feel,
No grating on his vessel's keel ;
A strip of silver sand
Mingled the waters with the land
Where he was seen no more :
O stern word—Nevermore !

Full short his journey was ; no dust
Of earth unto his sandals clave ;
The weary weight that old men must,
He bore not to the grave.
He seemed a cherub who had lost his way
And wandered hither, so his stay
With us was short, and 'twas most meet
That he should be no delver in earth's clod,
Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet
To stand before his God :
O blest word—Evermore !

J. R. LOWELL

EPITAPH ON EROTION BY MARTIAL

UNDERNEATH this greedy stone
Lies little sweet Eroton ;
Whom the Fates, with hearts as cold,
Nipp'd away at six years old.

Thou, whoever thou may'st be,
That hast this small field after me,
Let the yearly rites be paid
To her little slender shade ;
So shall no disease or jar
Hurt thy house, or chill thy Lar ;
But this tomb here be alone,
The only melancholy stone.

LEIGH HUNT

UPON THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF THE
HONOURABLE HOPEFULL YOUNG
GENTLEMAN, EDWARD STAFFORD,
SONNE AND HEIRE TO THE LORD
STAFFORD

O F such I write, who show'd he would have
been
Complete in action, but we lost him green.
We only saw him crown'd with flowers of hope :
O that the fruits had giv'n me larger scope !
And yet the bloomes which on his hearse we strow,
Surpassee the cherries, and the grapes that grow
In other gardens. Here fresh roses lie
Whose ruddy flushes modest thoughts descry ;
In flowre-de-luces, dide with azure hue,
His constant love to heavenly things we view :
The spotless lillies shew his pure intent,
The flaming marigold his zeale present,
The purple violets his noble minde,

Degenerate never from his princely kind ;
 And last of all the hyacinths we throw,
 In which are writ the letters of our woe.

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT

A CHILD¹

NOT star or flower, but lovelier than these,
 The child came to us out of mysteries,
 And to the Giver
 We prayed that He should lay upon His gift
 Wisdom and health and sweetness, that his days
 Might flow like some fair river,
 Might be as bright and light as are the ways
 Of a bird's wing in the blue summer lift.

Now all the stars and all the flowers are his
 Near and dear neighbours ; but our portion is
 Sorrow and discontent,
 Because so little way the child's feet went
 In this our twisting pathway, that they knew
 Only that grass was soft and speedwell blue,
 Not breath or touch of failure, little Hugh !

And I, the stranger, make a song for him,
 The little child, run truant into dim
 Countries of dreams fulfilled,
 More dear and fair
 Perhaps than here our visions for him were.

¹ Hugh Burnett, son of Mr. Harold Chesson.

And I, who knew his love not, share his lack
And fain would help his kindred call him back ;
But, being helpless, stand and see him pass
Heavenwards again ere dew dries off the grass,
Or glow is off the dream-house we did build.
I that would speak of comfort give no more
Than foolish tears on handles of a door
Fast bolted, that drop down like bitter myrrh.
My hand is on the latch I dare not move :
I stand outside the room of death and love—
The mother's sacred room of love and grief.
Here comfort withers like an autumn leaf,
And Hope's sweet eyes are dim,
And none save she may seek to comfort him,
And none, save God, may pass and pity her.

Save God the Giver

Who has the lambs in charge, and having given
Borrows, but takes not back, and in His Heaven
Gives the child a long life—yea, for ever and ever !

From "Songs of the Morning"

NORA CHESSON

BUT though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest. For honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. He pleased God and was beloved of him : so that living among sinners he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his under-

standing, or deceit beguile his soul. . . . He being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time: For his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hasted he to take him away from the wicked.

From "The Wisdom of Solomon," chap. iv

EPITAPH ON KATHERINE, DAUGHTER
OF MR. WM. PARMYNTER OF
WATERMOUTH, 1660, in ILFRACOMBE
CHURCH

THE maid is not dead but sleepeth.
Reader, don't abuse thy sense,
And think a soul is gone from hence:
She never dwelt below. Her love,
Her life, her soule was still above.
Soe meeke, soe good, soe pure, soe sweet,
She'd make the Lamb a wife most meet.
The bridegroom called and shee replied—
I am in love with Christ, and died.

THE LOST LITTLE SISTER

ON summer nights, as days did gleam,
With waning light, from red to wan,
And we did play above the stream,
That near our house-lawn rambled on,

Our little sister lightly flew
And skipp'd about, in all her pride
Of snow-white frock and sash of blue,
A shape that night was slow to hide—
Beside the brook, that trickled thin
Among the pebbles, out and in.

When wind may blow, at evening tide,
Now here, now there, by mound and nook,
It may be on the leafy lime,
Or grey-bough'd withy by the brook,
Or on the apple trees may fall,
Or on the elms, beside the grove,
Or on the lofty tower's wall,
On places where we used to rove—
Then ev'ry sound, in ev'ry place,
Will call to mind her pretty face.

Where periwinkle's buds of blue,
By lilies' hollow cups may wind,
What, then, can their two colours do
But call our sister back to mind ?
She wore no black—she wore her white,
She wore no black—she wore her blue.
She never mourn'd another's flight,
For she has been the first that flew,
From where our nimble feet did tread,
From stone to stone, the water's bed.

WILLIAM BARNES

EPITAPH ON SALATHIEL PAVY, A CHILD
OF QUEEN ELIZABETH'S CHAPEL¹

WEEP with me, all you that read
 This little story :
 And know, for when a tear you shed
 Death's self is sorry.
 'Twas a child that so did thrive
 In grace and feature,
 As Heaven and Nature seem'd to strive
 Which own'd the creature.
 Years he numbered scarce thirteen
 When Fates turn'd cruel,
 Yet three fill'd zodiacs had he been
 The stage's jewel ;
 And did act (what now we moan)
 Old men so duly,
 As sooth the Parcae thought him one,
 He play'd so truly ;
 So, by error, to his fate
 They all consented ;
 But, viewing him since, alas too late !
 They have repented ;
 And have sought, to give new birth
 In baths to steep him ;
 But, being so much too good for earth,
 Heaven vows to keep him.

BEN JONSON

¹ These children were trained up to act before the queen. Salathiel used to act the part of an old man.

UPON YOUNG MR. ROGERS OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

O F gentle blood, his parents' only treasure,
Their lasting sorrow, and their vanish'd
pleasure,
Adorn'd with features, virtues, wit, and grace,
A large provision for so short a race ;
More moderate gifts might have prolong'd his
date,
Too early fitted for a better state ;
But, knowing heaven his home, to shun delay,
He leap'd o'er age, and took the shortest way.

JOHN DRYDEN

THE DISCOVERER

I HAVE a little kinsman
Whose earthly summers are but three,
And yet a voyager is he
Greater than Drake or Frobisher,
Than all their peers together !
He is a brave discoverer,
And, far beyond the tether
Of them who seek the frozen Pole,
Has sailed where the noiseless surges roll.
Ay, he has travelled whither
A winged pilot steered his bark
Through the portals of the dark,
Past hoary Mimirs' well and tree,
Across the unknown sea.

Suddenly, in his fair young hour,
Came one who bore a flower,
And laid it in his dimpled hand
With this command :
“ Henceforth thou art a rover !
Thou must make a voyage far,
Sail beneath the evening star,
And a wondrous land discover.”
—With his sweet smile innocent
Our little kinsman went.

Since that time no word
From the absent has been heard.
Who can tell
How he fares, or answer well
What the little one has found
Since he left us, outward bound ?
Would that he might return !
Then should we learn
From the pricking of his chart
How the skyey roadways part.
Hush ! does not the baby this way bring,
To lay beside the severed curl,
Some starry offering
Of chrysolite or pearl ?

Ah, no ! not so !
We may follow on his track,
But he comes not back.
And yet I dare aver
He is a brave discoverer
Of climes his elders do not know.

He has more learning than appears
 On the scroll of twice three thousand years,
 More than in the groves is taught,
 Or from furthest Indies brought ;
 He knows, perchance, how spirits fare,—
 What shapes the angels wear,
 What is their guise and speech
 In those lands beyond our reach,—
 And his eyes behold
 Things that shall never, never be to mortal
 hearers told.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD

HI THER come, at close of day,
 And o'er this dust, sweet mothers, pray !
 A little infant lies within,
 Who never knew the name of sin,
 Belovèd,—bright,—and all our own ;
 Like morning fair,—and sooner flown !

No leaves or garlands wither here,
 Like those in foreign lands ;
 No marble hides our dear one's bier,
 The work of alien hands :
 The months it lived, the name it bore,
 The silver telleth,—nothing more !

No more ;—yet silence stalketh round
 This vault so dim and deep ;

And Death keeps watch without a sound,
Where all lie pale and sleep ;
But palest here and latest hid,
Is He—beneath this coffin lid.

How fair he was—how *very* fair,
What dreams we pondered o'er,
Making his life so long and clear,
His fortunes flowing o'er ;
Our hopes—that he would happy be,
When we ourselves were old,)
The scenes we saw, or hoped to see—
They're soon and sadly told.
All was a dream !—It came and fled ;
And left us here,—among the dead !

Pray, mothers, pray, at close of day,
While we, sad parents, weep alway !
Pray, too (and softly be't and long),
That all *your* babes, now fair and strong,
May blossom like—not like the rose,
For that doth fade when summer goes ;

('Twas thus *our* pretty infant died,
The summer and its mother's pride !)
But, like some stern enduring tree,
That reacheth its green century,
May grow, may flourish, then decay,
After a long, calm, happy day,
Made happier by good deeds to men,
And hopes in heaven to meet again !

Pray!—From the happy prayer is due ;
While we—('tis all we now can do !)
Will check our tears, and pray with you.

BARRY CORNWALL

OUR LITTLE CHILD WITH RADIANT EYES

WITH seeking hearts we still grope on,
Where dropt our Jewel in the dust ;
The looking crowd have long since gone,
And still we seek with lonely trust ;
O little Child with radiant eyes !

In all our heart-ache we are drawn,
Unweeting, to your little grave ;
There, on your heavenly shore of dawn,
Breaks, gentlier Sorrow's sobbing wave ;
O little Child with radiant eyes !

Dark underneath the brightening sod,
The sweetest life of all our years
Is crowded in ae gift to God.
Outside the gate we stand in tears !
O little Child with radiant eyes !

Heart-empty as the Acorn-cup
That only fills with wintry showers,
The breaking cloud but brimmeth up
With tears this pleading life of ours.
O little Child with radiant eyes !

We think of you, our Angel kith,
Till life grows light with starry leaven :
We never forget you, Darling with
The golden hair waving high in heaven !
 O ur little Child with radiant eyes !

Your white wings grown you will conquer Death !
You are coming through our dreams even now,
With azure peep of heaven beneath
The arching glory of your brow,
 O ur little Child with radiant eyes !

We cannot pierce the dark, but oft
You see us with looks of pitying balm ;
A hint of heaven—a touch more soft
Than kisses—all the trouble is calm.
 O ur little Child with radiant eyes !

Think of us wearied in the strife ;
And when we sit by Sorrow's streams,
Shake down upon our drooping life
The dew that brings immortal dreams.

 O ur little Child with radiant eyes !

GERALD MASSEY

(“My Lyrical Life,” Second Series, p. 172.)

“ I AM soe full of griefe for the Death of my
poore children, that I must needes vent
some part of it to thee. What shall I say? for
every line, every word and sillable about this

businesse encreaseth both thy sorrows and my owne. Therefore I shall endeavour to leave deploring theire losse, for they are most unspeakable gainers by this Change; and since 'tis soe (if we do not love ourselves much more then them) wee should rather rejoice at their happiness, then by repining at the Will of Heaven, pull new Judgments down uppon our owne heads. Tis true they are taken from us (and that's theire happiness); but wee shall goe to them (and that should bee our comfort). And is it not much better both for us and them, that wee should rather assend to heaven to partake of theire perpetuall blisse, then they descend to Earth to share with us our misfortunes. But perhapps you will say wee must passe by the Gates of Death, and lodge in (the common Inn of all mankinde) the grave. Alas, have not all our Fathers, nay and these our beloved children too, Trod in the same pathes and shall wee feare to follow the stepps of soe many Saints that are gonне before us? Had you but seene with what unparraleld patience poore Pegg bore all her paines, and with what discretion and affection she disposed of her wearing cloathes unto her maide that tended her, and lastly with what admirable cheerfulness and courage desiring prayers to bee made for her, shee peaceably resigned her soule into the hands of him that gave it, I am most confident that thou wouldest have learned of this our innocent Babe to bee

courageous in all thy conflicts, patient in all thy afflictions, and her example would have taught thee to submitt all things to the good pleasure of God, how nearely soever they concerne thy selfe or mee."

Letter from Sir Ralph to his wife on the death of their two children, "Verney Memoirs"

EPITAPH

H EERE lies a blossom of the worlds greate tree
W^{ch} was as faire as Buds of Roses bee.
She died an infant: Heaven was made for suche.
Live thou as Infants doe shalt have as muche.

ANOTHER

T RED softly passenger for heere doethe lie
A tender parsell of sweet Infancie,
A harmless Babe that only came and criede
Through Baptisme to be washte from sinn. So died.
From the Verney Manuscripts, "Memoirs of the Verney Family"

HYMN UPON THE INNOCENTS

HAIL you sweet babes! that are the flowers,
 Whom (when you life begin to taste),
 The enemy of Christ devours,
 As whirlwinds down the roses cast.

First sacrifice to Christ you went,
 Of offer'd lambs a tender sort ;
 With palms and crowns you innocent
 Before the sacred altar sport.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND

ON AN INFANT WHICH DIED BEFORE
BAPTISM

“BE, rather than be called, a Child of God ! ”
 Death whispered ;—with assenting nod,
 Its head upon its mother’s breast
 The baby bowed, without demur—
 Of the kingdom of the Blest
 Possessor, not inheritor.”

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

MISTRESS MARY PRIDEAUX

WEEP not because this childe hath dyed
so young,
But weepe because yourselves have livd so long :
Age is not fild by growth of time, for then
What old man lives to see th' estate of men ?
Who sees the age of grande Methusalem ?
Ten years make us as old as hundreds him.
Ripenesse is from ourselves : and then wee dye
When nature hath obteynde maturity.
Summer and winter fruits there bee, and all
Not at one time, but being ripe, must fall.
Death did not erre : your mourners are beguilde ;
She dyed more like a mother than a childe.
Weigh the composure of her pretty parts ;
Her gravity in childhood ; all her arts
Of womanly behaviour ; weigh her tongue
So wisely measurede, not too short nor long ;
And to her youth adde some few riches more,
She tooke upp now what due was at threescore.
She livd seven years, our age's first degree ;
Journeys at first time ended happy bee ;
Yet take her stature with the age of man,
They well are fitted : both are but a span.

WILLIAM STRODE

ON THE DEATH OF HIS FIRST-BORN SON

WHOSO studieth, as I have done, upon the first twelve months of a child; whoso hath had such a child to reflect upon, as the Lord for fifteen months did bless me withal, whom I would not now recall, if a wish could recall him from the service of our dear Lord, will rather marvel how the growth of that wonderful creature, which put forth such a glorious bud of being, should come to be so choked by the flesh, cramped by the world, and cut short by Satan, as not to become a winged seraph, will rather wonder how such a puny, heartless, feeble thing as manhood should be the abortive fruit of the rich bud of childhood, than think that childhood is an imperfect promise and opening of the future man. And therefore it is that I grudged not our noble, lovely child, but rather do delight that such a seed should blossom and bear in the kindly and kindred Paradise of my God.

And why should I not speak of thee, my Edward, seeing that it was in the season of thy sickness and death the Lord did reveal in me the knowledge and hope and desire of his Son in heaven?

Glorious exchange! He took my son to his more fatherly bosom, and revealed in my bosom

the new expectation and faith of his own eternal Son! Dear season of my life, ever to be remembered, when I knew the sweetness and fruitfulness of such joy and sorrow.

EDWARD IRVING

THE CHILD'S GREÄVE

AVORE the time when zuns went down
On zummer's green a-turn'd to brown,
When sheädes o' swayin wheat-eärs vell
Upon the scarlet pimpernel;
The while you still mid goo, an' vind
'Ithin the geärdens mossy wall,
Sweet blossoms, low or risen tall,
To meäke a tutty to your mind,
In churchyard heaved, wi' grassy breast,
The greäve-mound ov a beäby's rest.

An' when a high day broke, to call
A throng 'ithin the churchyard wall,
The mother brought, wi' thoughtful mind,
The feärest buds her eyes could vind,
To trim the little greäve, an' show
To other souls her love an' loss,
An' meäde a Seävior's little cross
O' brightest flowers that then did blow,
A-droppin tears a-sheenin bright,
Among the dew, in mornin light.

An woone sweet bud her han' did pleäce
 Up where did droop the Seävior's feäce ;
 An' two she zet a-bloomin bright,
 Where reach'd His hands o' left an' right ;
 Two mwore feäir blossoms, crimson dyed,
 Did mark the pleäces ov His veet,
 An' woone did lie, a-smellin sweet,
 Up where the spear did wound the zide
 Ov Him that is the life ov all
 Greäve sleepers, whether big or small.

The mother that in faïth could zee
 The Seävior on the high cross tree
 Mid be a-vound a-grievin sore,
 But not to grieve vor evermwore,
 Vor He shall show her faithvul mind,
 His chaïce is all that she should choose,
 An' love that here do grieve to lose,
 Shall be, above, a joy to vind,
 Wi' Him that evermwore shall keep
 The souls that He do lay asleep.

WILLIAM BARNES

THE CHILD ALONE

THEY say the night has fallen chill,
 But I know nought of mist and rain,
 Only of two small hands that still
 Beat on the darkness all in vain.

They say that wind blows high and wild
Down the long valleys to the sea ;
But I can only hear the child
Who weeps in darkness, wanting me.

Beyond the footfalls in the street,
Above the voices of the bay,
I hear the sound of little feet,
Two little stumbling feet astray.

O, loud the autumn wind makes moan,
The desolate wind about my door,
And a little child goes all alone
Who never was alone before.

ROSAMOND MARRIOTT WATSON

TENDER Shepherd, Thou hast still'd
Now Thy little lamb's brief weeping ;
Oh, how peaceful, pale and mild,
In its narrow bed 'tis sleeping,
And no sigh of anguish sore
Heaves that little bosom more.

In a world of pain and care,
Lord, Thou would'st no longer leave it ;
To thy meadows bright and fair
Lovingly Thou dost receive it ;
Clothed in robes of spotless white
Now it dwells with Thee in light.

Ah, Lord Jesu, grant that we
 There may live where it is living,
 And the blissful pastures see
 That its heavenly food are giving ;
 Lost awhile our treasured love,
 Gain'd for ever, safe above.

Translated from the German by
 C. WINKWORTH

EPITAPH ON A LITTLE CHILD
 1867

PURE, sweet and fair, ere thou could'st taste
 of ill
 God will'd it, and thy baby breath was still.
 Now 'mong His lambs thou liv'st thy Saviour's
 care,
 For ever as thou wast, pure, sweet and fair.

F. T. PALGRAVE

MY mother was struck by the patient quietness manifested by Marjorie during this illness, unlike her ardent, impulsive nature ; but love and poetic feeling were unquenched. When Dr. Johnstone rewarded her submissiveness with a sixpence, the request speedily followed that she might get out ere New Year's day came. When asked why she was so desirous of getting out, she immediately rejoined, "Oh, I am so anxious to

buy something with my sixpence for my dear Isa Keith." Again, when lying very still, her mother asked her if there was anything she wished : "Oh yes ! if you would just leave the door open a wee bit, and play 'The Land o' the Leal,' and I will lie and *think*, and enjoy myself" (this is just as stated to me by her mother and mine.) Well, the happy day came, alike to parents and child, when Marjorie was allowed to come forth from the nursery to the parlour. It was Sabbath evening, and after tea, my father, who idolised this child, and never afterwards in my hearing mentioned her name, took her in his arms ; and while walking her up and down the room, she said "Father, I will repeat something to you, what would you like?" He said "Just choose yourself, Maidie." She hesitated a moment between the paraphrase, "Few are thy days, and full of woe," and the lines of Burns already quoted, but decided on the latter, a remarkable choice for a child. . . . She went to bed apparently well, awoke in the middle of the night with the old cry of woe to a mother's heart, "My head, my head!" Three days of the dire malady, "water in the head," followed, and the end came.

It is needless, it is impossible, to add anything to this ; the fervour, the sweetness, the flush of poetic ecstasy, the lovely and glowing eye, the perfect nature of that bright and warm intelligence, that darling child,—Lady Nairne's words,

and the old tune, stealing up from the depths of the human heart, deep calling unto deep, gentle and strong like the waves of the great sea hushing themselves to sleep in the dark ;—the words of Burns, touching the kindred chord, her last numbers “ wildly sweet ” traced, with thin and eager fingers, already touched by the last enemy and friend,—moriens canit,—and that love which is so soon to be her everlasting light, is her song’s burden to the end.

“ She set as sets the morning star, which goes
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides
Obscured among the tempests of the sky,
But melts away into the light of heaven.”

“ Death of Marjorie Fleming ”

DR. JOHN BROWN

FOR PARENTS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR CHILDREN

Q UITE lost are now mine airy joys,
Once promised by a fruitful womb :
For my dear issue Death destroys ;
And full of grief I am become.

Those eyes, whereon I loved to look,
The voices which made glad mine ear,
Are out of sight and hearing took,
And shall no more delight me here.

I am a plant whose leaves are cropp'd,
Whose pleasant fruit is pluck'd away ;
Whose hopeful branches down are lopp'd
And left without a living spray.

To call me Father, none is left ;
My songs to mournful tunes are made,
And all the pleasures are bereft,
Which in a child I might have had.

Yet all rejoicing is not gone,
For, in my sorrows, comforts be ;
Because the soul which I bemoan,
Is found of God, though lost to me.

GEORGE WITHER

A LAMENT

THE merry merry lark was up and singing,
And the hare was out and feeding on the
lea ;
And the merry merry bells below were ringing,
When my child's laugh rang through me.

Now the hare is snared and dead beside the snow-
yard,
And the lark beside the dreary winter sea ;
And the baby in his cradle in the churchyard
Sleeps sound till the bell brings me.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

DEAR Sir; I am in some little disorder by reason of the death of a little child of mine, a boy that lately made us very glad; but now he rejoices in his little orb, while we think, and sigh, and long to be as safe as he is.

From a letter of JEREMY TAYLOR

AN EPITAPH

WHAT beauty would have lovely styled,
 What manners pretty, nature mild,
 What wonder perfect all were filed
 Upon record, in this blest child.
 And till the coming of the soul
 To fetch the flesh, we keep the roll.

BEN JONSON

A POSSIBILITY

(THE THOUGHT OF A MOURNING MOTHER)

MY little baby was buried to-day:
 She is gone deep down in the
 churchyard clay,
 And up in the sky so dull and gray.
 Who will take care of my little baby?

Who will kiss her? her waxen feet
That never have walked—her small hand
 sweet,
Where I left a white lily, as was meet—
Oh, who will kiss my little baby?

Who will teach her—her wings to try,
Her tender limbs their new work to ply,
Her soft dumb lips to sing gloriously—
Say, who will teach my little baby?

I have a mother. She died quite young;
All have forgotten her, long and long;
Will she find my pretty one in the blest
 throng,
And be glad to see my little baby?

Angels are far off—*she* is near :
Christ, born of a woman, hear, oh hear!
Give my child to my mother dear,
And I'll cease to weep for my little baby.

Nothing in heaven can be so blest,
Nothing so safe as a mother's breast :
Give her my lamb, and I shall rest
If my mother takes care of my little baby.

MRS. CRAIK (DINAH MULOCK)

SEEHEIM, August 2nd

MANY thanks for your dear letter! I am feeling so low and weak to-day that kind words are doubly soothing. You feel so with me, when you understand how long and deep my grief must be, and does one not grow to love one's grief, as having become part of the being one loved—as if through *this* one could still pay a tribute of love to them, to make up for the terrible loss, and missing of not being able to do anything for the beloved one any more? I am so much with my children, and am so accustomed to care for them and their wants daily, that I miss not having Frittie, the object of our greatest care, far more than words can describe; and in the quiet of our everyday life, where we have only the children around us, it is doubly and trebly felt, and is a sorrow that has entered into the very heart of our existence.

May the hour of trial and grief bring its blessing with it, and not have come in vain! The day passes so quickly, when one can do good and make others happy, and one leaves always so much undone. I feel more than ever one should put nothing off; and children grow up so quickly and leave one, and I would long that mine should take nothing but the recollection of love and happiness from their home with them into the world's fight, knowing that they have there *always* a safe harbour, and open arms to comfort and encourage them when they are in trouble. I do

hope that this may become the case, though the lesson for parents is so difficult, being continually *giving*, without always finding a return.

From a letter from Princess Alice, Grand Duchess of Hesse, to Queen Victoria after the sudden death of her son, the little Prince Frederick, on the 29th of May 1873. From "The Life of Princess Alice"

EPITAPH ON A CHILD IN LEICESTER CEMETERY

JESUS called a little Child unto Him.

TELLING THE BEES¹

OUT of the house where the slumberer lay
 Grandfather came one summer day,
 And under the pleasant orchard trees
 He spake this wise to the murmuring bees :
 "The clover-bloom that kissed her feet
 And the posie-bed where she used to play,
 Have honey store, but none so sweet
 As ere our little one went away.

¹ From a "Second Book of Verse"; copyright, 1892, by JULIA SUTHERLAND FIELD; published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

O bees, sing soft, and, bees, sing low ;
For she is gone who loved you so."

A wonder fell on the listening bees
Under those pleasant orchard trees,
And in their toil that summer day
Ever their murmuring seemed to say :
" Child, O child, the grass is cool,
And the posies are waking to hear the song
Of the bird that sings by the shaded pool,
Waiting for one that tarrieth long."
'Twas so they called to the little one then,
As if to call her back again.

O gentle bees, I have come to say
That grandfather fell asleep to-day,
And we know by the smile on grandfather's face
He has found his dear one's hiding-place.
So, bees, sing soft, and, bees, sing low,
As over the honey-fields you sweep—
To the trees abloom and the flowers ablow
Sing of grandfather fast asleep ;
And ever beneath these orchard trees
Find cheer and shelter, gentle bees.

EUGENE FIELD

LINES TO VICTOR HUGO

ON READING OF HIS GREAT GRIEF FOR THE DEATH OF
HIS GRANDSON, VICTOR HUGO, AGED 1 YEAR
— MONTHS

HAS kindly Time made doon thy grief?
The soun's dee'd out that wailed sae wearie;
The deein' moans o' hopes that lay
Like wither'd leaves roun' thy wee dearie.

Fresh from his rosy sleep, I ween,
How fondly cuddlin' ye wad bless him ;
But oh ! I dinna, canna ken,
When stretched in death how ye wad kiss him.

The agony of life to live,
Reft o' the pride with which ye view'd him ;
To feel the thought torn frae your breist,
“ How proud he'll be to think I lo'ed him.”

I ken the ploys that ye had plann'd,
The summer days' sweet lingering journeys,
To pu' the gowans, or to sit
By thymey brim o' moorlan' burnies.

Or sing him sangs that he wad ken
The meanin' o' when he grew older ;
And as thy voice rose wi' the strain
Note that his braid brow look'd bolder.

I hae an oe, a lassie wean,—
A wee ma'msel' as ye wad ca' her,

I look at her, then think o' thee :—
What wad I do did ought befa' her !

Your grief has griev'd me, and I feel
Man's closely linked wi' ane anither ;
Thy darlin' grandchild's made me know
His grandpa's but my bigger brither.

A mother bending owre an urn,
We inly feel for what she's greetin' ;
Or see that Hope, wi' upturned ee,
But calmly waits a promised meetin'.

Go, Mossman ! shape me deeper woe,
With all the power of Poet-Sculptor ;
An old bard with bewillow'd harp,—
Great Victor wailing little Victor.

WILLIAM MILLER

A CHILD'S GRAVE AT FLORENCE

A. A. E. C.

Born, July 1848. Died, November 1849

O F English blood, of Tuscan birth, . . .
What country should we give her ?
Instead of any on the earth,
The civic Heavens receive her.

And here, among the English tombs
In Tuscan ground we lay her,

While the blue Tuscan sky endomes
Our English words of prayer.

A little child!—how long she lived,
By months, not years, is reckoned :
Born in one July, she survived
Alone to see a second.

Bright-featured, as the July sun
Her little face still played in,
And splendours, with her birth begun,
Had had no time for fading.

So, Lily, from those July hours,
No wonder we should call her ;
She looked such kinship to the flowers,
Was but a little taller.

A Tuscan Lily,—only white,
As Dante, in abhorrence
Of red corruption, wished aright
The lilies of his Florence.

We could not wish her whiter—her
Who perfumed with pure blossom
The house, a lovely thing to wear
Upon a mother's bosom !

This July creature thought perhaps
Our speech not worth assuming ;
She sate upon her parents' laps
And mimicked the gnat's humming ;

Said “ Father,” “ Mother”—then left off,
For tongues celestial, fitter :
Her hair had grown just long enough
To catch heaven’s jasper-glitter.

Babes ! Love could always hear and see
Behind the cloud that hid them.
“ Let little children come to Me,
And do not thou forbid them.”

So, unforbidding, have we met,
And gently here have laid her,
Though winter is no time to get
The flowers that should o’erspread her :

We should bring pansies quick with spring.
Rose, violet, daffodilly,
And also, above everything,
White lilies for our Lily.

Nay, more than flowers, this grave extracts,—
Glad, grateful attestations
Of her sweet eyes and pretty acts,
With calm renunciations.

Her very mother with light feet
Should leave the place too earthy,
Saying, “ The Angels have thee, Sweet,
Because we are not worthy.”

But winter kills the orange-buds,
The gardens in the frost are,

A CHILD'S GRAVE AT FLORENCE 73

And all the heart dissolves in floods,
Remembering we have lost her.

Poor earth, poor heart,—too weak, too weak
To miss the July shining !
Poor heart !—what bitter words we speak,
When God speaks of resigning !

Sustain this heart in us that faints,
Thou God, the self-existent !
We catch up wild at parting saints
And feel Thy Heaven too distant.

The wind that swept them out of sin,
Has ruffled all our vesture :
On the shut door that let them in,
We beat with frantic gesture,—

To us, us also, open straight !
The outer life is chilly ;
Are *we* too, like the earth, to wait
Till next year for our Lily ?

—Oh, my own baby on my knees,
My leaping, dimpled treasure,
At every word I write like these,
Clasped close, with stronger pressure !

Too well my own heart understands,—
At every word beats fuller—
My little feet, my little hands,
And hair of Lily's colour !

But God gives Patience, Love learns strength,
And Faith remembers promise,
And Hope itself can smile at length
On other hopes gone from us.

Love strong as Death, shall conquer Death,
Through struggle, made more glorious :
This mother stills her sobbing breath,
Renouncing yet victorious.

Arms, empty of her child, she lifts
With spirit unbereaven,—
“God will not all take back His gifts ;
My Lily’s mine in heaven.

“ Still mine ! Maternal rights serene
Not given to another !
The crystal bars shine faint between
The souls of child and mother.

“ Meanwhile,” the mother cries, “ content !
Our love was well divided :
Its sweetness following where she went,
Its anguish stayed where I did.

“ Well done of God to halve the lot,
And give her all the sweetness ;
To us, the empty room and cot,—
To her, the Heaven’s completeness.

“ To us, this grave,—to her, the rows
The mystic palm-trees spring in ;

To us, the silence in the house,—
To her, the choral singing.

“ For her to gladden in God’s view,—
For us, to hope and bear on.
Grow, Lily, in thy garden new,
Beside the Rose of Sharon !

“ Grow fast in heaven, sweet Lily clipped,
In love more calm than this is,
And may the angels dewy-lipped
Remind thee of our kisses !

“ While none shall tell thee of our tears,
These human tears now falling,
Till, after a few patient years,
Our home shall take us all in.

“ Child, father, mother—who, left out ?
Not mother, and not father !
And when, our dying couch about,
The natural mists shall gather,

“ Some smiling angel close shall stand
In old Corregio’s fashion,
And bear a Lily in his hand,
For death’s annunciation.”

E. B. BROWNING

BROTHER AND SISTER

(FROM THE GREEK OF LEONIDAS OF TARENTUM)

IN her seventh year this little maid
First of her playmates passed away,
To Hades where her brother's shade
Awaits her to renew their play.
But twenty months had she been dear
Who now has tasted loveless death,
Ah, poor Peristius, how near
Is woe to men of mortal breath !

ANDREW LANG

ALITTLE rudely sculptured bed,
With shadowing folds of marble lace,
And quilt of marble, primly spread
And folded round a baby's face.

Smoothly the mimic coverlet,
With royal blazonries bedight,
Hangs, as by tender fingers set,
And straightened for the last good-night.

And traced upon the pillowing stone
A dent is seen, as if, to bless
That quiet sleep, some grieving one
Had leaned, and left a soft impress.

Written by SUSAN COOLIDGE on seeing the
tomb of the Princess Sophia, fourth

daughter of James I, in Westminster Abbey. "A royal rose-bud, plucked by premature fate, and snatched away from her parents, that she might flourish again in the rosary of Christ."

I AM glad of your health, and of the recovery of your little ones; but, indeed, it was a sharp stroke of the pen that told me your little Johnny was dead, and I felt it truly more, to my remembrance, than I did the death of any child in my lifetime. Sweet thing! And is he so quickly laid asleep? Happy he! Though we shall no more have the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor of being sick, nor of dying; and hath wholly escaped the trouble of schooling and all the suffering of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of upper years,—this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and of many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now so much more akin to the other world, and this will be quickly past to us all. John is but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of the present world, and all things superfluous beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down.

From a letter of ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON

THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE

WHENE'ER there comes a little child,
My darling comes with him ;
Whene'er I hear a birdie wild
Who sings his merry whim,
Mine sings with him :
If a low strain of music sails
Among melodious hills and dales,
When a white lamb or kitten leaps,
Or star, or vernal flower peeps,
When rainbow dews are pulsing joy,
Or sunny waves, or leaflets toy,
Then he who sleeps
Softly wakes within my heart ;
With a kiss from him I start ;
He lays his head upon my breast,
Tho' I may not see my guest,
Dear bosom-guest !
In all that's pure and fair and good,
I feel the spring-time of thy blood,
Hear thy whispered accents flow
To lighten woe,
Feel them blend,
Although I fail to comprehend.
And if one woundeth with harsh word,
Or deed, a child, or beast, or bird,
It seems to strike weak Innocence
Through him, who hath for his defence

Thunder of the all-loving Sire,
And mine, to whom He gave the fire.

From "A Little Child's Monument"
Hon. RODEN NOEL

THE STORY OF A MOTHER

A POOR mother sat watching by the cradle of her little baby. She was very anxious and sorrowful ; she dreaded that it was going to be taken from her. Its little eyes were closed, and it was deathly pale ; it breathed very faintly, with now and then a long trembling breath like a sigh. The mother grew sadder and sadder as she looked at it.

There was a knock at the door, and a poor old man came in ; he was wrapped in a big horse-cloth, which he needed to keep him warm, it was so very cold. Outside everything was covered with ice and snow, and a biting wind whistled round the house.

As the old man was shaking with cold, and the baby had dropped asleep for a moment, the mother got up and put some beer in a little mug on the stove to warm for him. The old man sat rocking the cradle, and the woman sat down on a chair close to him and watched the sick child, who drew its breath more deeply still, and feebly waved its little hand about.

"You think I shall keep him, don't you?" said she. "The Lord won't take him from me?"

And the old man, who was Death himself, nodded in such a curious way that she did not know whether it meant yes or no. The mother bent her head, and the tears rolled down her cheeks. Her head was so heavy, she had not closed her eyes for three nights and days, and she fell asleep, but only for a moment, then she started up shivering with cold.

"What is it?" she said, looking about to every side. But the old man was gone, and her little child was gone; he had taken it with him. The old clock in the corner whirred and whirred, and the big lead weight ran right down to the ground with a bang and then the clock stopped too. But the poor mother rushed out of the house calling for her child.

Out there, all in the snow, sat a woman in long black clothes, and she said, "Death has been into your room. I saw him hurrying away with your little child; he goes faster than the wind, and he never brings back what he takes away."

"Only tell me which way he went," said the mother. "Tell me the way and I shall find him."

"I know the way," said the woman in the black clothes; "but before I tell it you, you must sing me all the songs you used to sing to your baby; I like them; I have often heard

them before. I am Night. I saw your tears while you sang."

"I will sing them all—all," said the mother; "but don't stop me; let me go that I may find my little baby."

But Night stood still and silent, and the mother wrung her hands, sang and wept. There were many songs, but many, many more tears.

At last Night said, "Go to the right, into the dark pine wood. I saw Death take that road with your child."

In the heart of the wood she came to a cross-road and she did not know which way to go. There was a black thorn bush just at the crossing with neither leaf nor flower on it, for it was the hard winter-time, and icicles hung from the branches. "Have you not seen Death pass by with my little child?"

"Yes," said the black thorn bush; "but I won't tell you which way he went unless you will warm me at your heart. I am dying of cold; I shall soon be nothing but ice."

And she pressed the black thorn bush to her heart so tightly, that the thorns ran into the flesh, and great drops of blood flowed; but fresh green leaves and flowers sprung out on the thorn bush that cold winter night, such was the warmth of a sad mother's heart, and the thorn bush told her the way to go.

Then she came to a great lake, on which there were neither ships nor boats. The lake was not

frozen hard enough to bear her, nor was it open or shallow enough for her to wade through it; but over it somehow she must go if she would find her child. She lay down to drink up the water, but that was of course impossible; the poor mother thought, however, that a miracle might happen.

"Now this will never do!" said the lake. "Let us see if we two can't make a bargain. I collect pearls, and your eyes are the brightest I have seen; if you will cry them out for me, I will carry you over to the great hot-house where Death lives and looks after his plants and flowers, every one of which is a human life."

"Oh what would I not give to reach my child!" said the weeping mother, and she wept more than ever, till her eyes dropped down to the bottom of the lake and became two precious pearls. Then the lake lifted her as if she had been in a swing, and she was borne in a moment from the shore where she stood to the other side. Here stood a curious house a mile wide; one could hardly tell whether it was a mountain covered with woods and hollows, or whether it was built up; but the poor mother could not see it, you know, for she had cried her eyes out.

"Where shall I find Death, who carried off my little child?" she said.

"He has not come back here yet," said the old crone, whose business it was to tend Death's

big hot-house. "However did you get here and who helped you?"

"Our Lord has helped me," said she. "He is merciful, and so will you be. Where shall I find my child?"

"I don't know," said the woman, "and you can't see. Many flowers and trees have withered in the night; Death will soon come and transplant them. You know that every human being has his or her tree of life, or flower, according as they are made; they look like other plants, but they have beating human hearts. A child's heart can beat too. Walk about here, perhaps you will recognise your child's; but what will you give me if I tell you what more you must do?"

"I have nothing to give," said the mother sadly, "but I will go to the end of the world for you."

"I've got nothing to do there," said the woman; "but you can give me your long black hair; I'm sure you know yourself that it is beautiful, and I fancy it. I'll give you my white hair in place of it, that will always be something."

"Don't you ask more than that," said she; "I will give it you gladly," and she gave her beautiful black hair and received the old woman's white hair in exchange.

Then they went into Death's big hot-house, where the flowers and trees grew curiously mixed up together. Here were delicate hyacinths under

bell glasses, and there were great strong peonies ; here were water plants, some quite fresh, others sickly with water snakes wound round them, and little black cray fish pinching their stems. Here were beautiful palm trees, oaks and plane trees ; there grew parsley and sweet scented thyme ; every tree and every flower had its name. Each one was a human life, living still, one in China, one in Greenland, scattered round about the world. There were big trees in small pots, growing in a stunted way, ready to burst their pots ; and there were also, in other places, little tiresome flowers in rich earth surrounded with moss, and covered and tended. But the sad mother bent over all the tiniest plants and listened for the human heart beating in them. Among a million she knew her child's at once.

"This is it!" she cried, stretching out her hands over a little blue crocus which hung feebly down to one side.

"Don't touch the flower," said the old woman, "but place yourself here, so that when Death comes (for I expect him every minute) you may prevent him from pulling it up ; threaten him that you will do the same to the other flowers, then he will be frightened. He has to answer to our Lord for them, not one may be pulled up without His leave."

All at once an icy wind whistled through the place, and the blind mother felt that Death had come.

"How didst thou find thy way hither?" asked he. "How couldst thou get here before me?"

"I am a mother," she said.

Then Death stretched out his long hand towards the delicate little flower, but she clasped her hand tightly round his, in terror lest he should touch one of the leaves. Death breathed upon her hands; she felt that his breath was colder than the coldest wind, and her hands fell numbly away from his.

"You have no power against me, you see," said Death.

"But our Lord has!" said she.

"I only do His will," said Death. "I am His gardener."

"Give me back my child!" said the mother, with tears and prayers; suddenly she clutched with both hands two beautiful flowers growing close by, and called out to Death, "I will pull up all your flowers, for I am in despair!"

"Touch them not!" said Death. "Thou sayst that thou art unhappy, yet wouldest thou make some other mother equally unhappy——!"

"Some other mother!" said the poor woman, letting go the flowers at once.

"Here hast thou thine eyes back again," said Death; "I fished them up out of the lake, they shone so brightly; I did not know that they were thine. Take them back again, they are brighter than ever. Look down into the deep well close by, I will name the names of those flowers

thou wast about to pluck, and thou shalt see their whole lives, and all that future thou wast about to destroy."

And she looked down into the well; it was happiness to see how one of them became a blessing to the world, and to see how much joy and pleasure was enfolded around him. Then she saw the life of the other, and that life was all sorrow and need, sin and misery.

"Both lives are according to the Will of God!" said Death.

"Which of them is the flower of misery and which of blessedness?"

"That I may not tell thee," said Death; "but I may tell thee that one of the flowers was thy own child's; it was thy child's fate thou sawest, thine own child's future."

Then the mother shrieked in terror. "Which was my child? Tell me that! Save the wretched one! Save my child from all that misery! Rather carry it away! bear it unto God's kingdom! Forget my tears, forget my prayers, and all that I have said and done!"

"I do not understand thee!" said Death; "wilt thou have thy child back, or shall I take it whither thou knowest not?"

The mother wrung her hands, fell upon her knees, and prayed to Our Father, "Do not listen to me when I pray against Thy will, which is best; do not listen, do not listen!" and she bent her head in humble submission.

Then Death carried her child into the Unknown Land.

HANS ANDERSEN

Translated by Mrs. E. LUCAS

WHEN BESSIE DIED

"**I**F from your own the dimpled hands had slipped,
And ne'er would nestle in your palm again ;
If the white feet into the grave had tripped"—
When Bessie died—
We braided the brown hair and tied
It just as her own little hands
Had fastened back the silken strands
A thousand times—the crimson bit
Of ribbon woven into it
That she had worn with childish pride—
Smoothed down the dainty bow—and cried—
When Bessie died.

When Bessie died—

We drew the nursery blinds aside,
And, as the morning in the room
Burst like a primrose into bloom,
Her pet canary's cage we hung
Where she might hear him when he sung—
And yet not any note he tried,
Though she lay listening folded-eyed.

When Bessie died—
We writhed in prayer unsatisfied ;
We begged of God, and He did smile
In silence on us all the while ;
And we did see Him through our tears,
Enfolding that fair form of hers,
She laughing back against His love
The kisses we had nothing of—
And death to us he still denied,
When Bessie died—

When Bessie died.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

EPITAPH

(FROM THE GREEK OF CALLAMACHUS)

ON A BOY OF TWELVE

PHILIP his father laid here the twelve-years
old child, his high hope, Nicoteles.

Translated by J. W. MACKAIL

EPITAPH ON A TOMB IN ASHBOURNE CHURCH

TO the Memory of Penelope Boothby. She
was in form and intellect most exquisite.
The unfortunate parents ventured their all in
this frail bark—and the wreck was total.

TO THE LADY CREW UPON THE
DEATH OF HER CHILD

WHY, Madame, will ye longer weep,
 When as your baby's lull'd asleep ?
 And, pretty child, feeles now no more
 Those paines it lately felt before.
 All now is silent ; groanes are fled :
 Your child lyes still, yet is not dead :
 But rather like a flower hid here
 To spring againe another yeare.

HERRICK

WITHIN a mile of Edinburgh Town
 We laid our little darling down ;
 Our first seed in God's acre sown !

So sweet a place ! Death looks beguiled
 Of half his gloom ; or softly smiled
 To win our wondrous, spirit-child.

God giveth His Belovèd sleep
 So calm, within its silence deep,
 As Angel-guards the watch did keep.

The City looketh solemn and sweet ;
 It bears a gentle brow, to greet
 The Mourners, mourning at its feet.

The sea of human life breaks round
This shore o' the dead, with softened sound ;
Wild-flowers climb each mossy mound

To place in resting hands their palm,
And breathe their beauty, bloom, and balm ;
Folding the dead in fragrant calm.

A lighter shadow Grief might wear ;
And old Heartache come gather there
The peace that falleth after prayer.

Poor heart, that danced among the vines
All reeling-ripe with wild love-wines,
Thou walk'st with Death among the pines !

Lorn Mother, at the dark grave-door,
She kneeleth, pleading o'er and o'er,
But it is shut for evermore.

Blind ! blind ! She feels, but cannot read
Aright ; then leans as she would feed
The dear dead lips that never heed.

The spirit of life may leap above,
But in that grave her prisoned Dove
Lies, cold to th' warm embrace of love.

And dark, tho' all the world is bright ;
And lonely, with a City in sight ;
And desolate in the rainy night.

Ah, God ! when in the glad life-cup
The face of Death swims darkly up ;
The crowning flower is sure to droop !

And so we laid our Darling down,
When Summer's cheek grew ripely brown,
And still, tho' grief hath milder grown,

Unto the Stranger's land we cleave,
Like some poor Birds that grieve and grieve,
Round the robbed nest, so loth to leave.

GERALD MASSEY

(“My Lyrical Life,” Second Series, p. 167)

DIRGE ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD

THE river went weeping, weeping !
Ah me ! how it did weep !
But I would never heed it,
The weeping of the river,
Whilst thou wert at my breast.
The stars—poor stars—were weeping,
But I would not hear their weeping
Whilst yet I heard thy voice.
Unhappy men drew nigh me and told me of their
woe,
They said : “We are the sorrow of all humanity.”
But I had no compassion for human misery,
Whilst thou wert with me still.

Then these—the river with its weeping,
The piteous stars, the miserable men,
All prayed the earth's dark depths to take thee
from me,

That so my woe might understand their woe ;
And now—I weep.

Yet weep I not for human misery,

Nor for the stars' complaining,

Nor for the river's wailing,

I weep for thee alone, most miserly,

Keep all my tears for thee !

Now I must rock for ever empty arms,

That grieve they have no burden any more.

Now I must sing, and know the while, no ears
are there to hearken.

The birds will ask me : “ To whom singest thou ? ”

The moon look down and ask : “ Whom rockest
thou ? ”

The grave will be right proud, while I am cursed,
That I did give her thee.

My womb upbraideth me, because I gave
To Death the gift that once she gave to me,
The gift that sprung from her—

Now I must see thy sleep, and never know
Whether this sleep be sweet.

Then do I ask of Earth :

“ Is the sleep sweet indeed,
That in thy lap we sleep ? ”

But ah ! thou knowest, Earth misliketh pity,
And loves to hold her peace !

Wilt thou, then, answer in her stead, and say :

“ What do the birds, O Mother,
Since I have gone to sleep ?
And the river with its pebbles,
Since I have gone to sleep ?
And thy broken heart, O Mother,
Thy little heart, dear Mother,
Since I have gone to sleep ?
Does my father guide the oxen,
Walking beside the ploughshare,
Since I have gone to sleep ? ”
Oh, say all this to me !
Answer instead of Earth, that knows no pity,
And loves to hold her peace.

The river went weeping, weeping !
Ah me ! how it did weep !
But I would never heed it,
The weeping of the river,
Whilst thou wert at my breast.
The stars, poor stars, were weeping,
But I would not hear their weeping,
Whilst yet I heard thy voice—

From “ The Bard of the Dimbowitza,”
translated by CARMEN SYLVA and
ALMA STRETELL

PERSEPHONE'S PLAYTHING

(FROM THE GREEK)

H ADES! deaf to prayer and wail,
Why hast thou twined the child from life?
The young Calaeschrus, surely he
Shall be a darling in the vale
Of poppy-crowned Persephone,
But he has left us sorrow rife.

ANDREW LANG

THE CHILD'S CALL

H E calls with quick, insistent cry,
He calls at work or play,
But I must put my business by,
And all my books away.

He summons me from household cares
Back to his sunny room,
And up the stairs and up the stairs
In happy haste I come.

Sweeter than lark and mavis dear,
And nightingales in May,
The little voice so shrill and clear
That I must yet obey.

While up the stairs and to the door
My heart runs on in glee,
I hear a voice I knew of yore
That never calls for me.

Ever through shadow-time and sun
I hear a baby call,
That is not you, my precious one,
That is not you at all.

Afar, where heavenly waters flow
'Mid Paradisal calms,
All on a sward where lilies blow,
The Shepherd counts his lambs.

Afar, beyond the wintry cold
Upon the heavenly hill,
A little lamb a few weeks old
Bleats for his mother still.

O mother's love and mother's joy !
But while I come in haste,
I hear another lovely boy
Cry from the lonely past.

And while I kiss your curls aside
And hold you to my breast,
I kiss the little boy that died,
That will not let me rest.

KATHERINE TYNAN-HINKSON

IN her eyes, her baby's face,
In her ears, her cry
Heard on the night, the summer night
God bade her die.
In her arms, her baby lies,
Creeps upon her breast,
And until they meet again
Never can she rest.

In his eyes, a pair of eyes
Full of love and duty.
And a face, which is a face
Of essential beauty.
In his heart, an aching void,
In his ears, a word
Never to be heard again,
Till God's trump is heard.

Sad their thoughts are, as they sit,
But it would be more sad
If they had the thoughts they have
And withal, were not sad ;
Not all sad, for well they know
Far above the sky
In the bosom of their God,
Their belovèd lie.

DR. JOHN BROWN

LIFE AND DEATH

GOD walked in heaven, on high, afar.
God thought a happy thought, and smiled.
The thought fell earthward like a star ;
The thought became a new-born child.

God walked and wondered : “ Yesterday
What happy thought my heart enthralled ? ”
Cold, white, and sweet the infant lay—
God, smiling, had His thought recalled.

WILLIAM CANTON

EPITAPH ON A CHILD

BENEATH, a sleeping infant lies
To Earth, whose body lent
More glorious shall hereafter rise,
Tho' not more innocent.
When the archangel's trump shall blow
And soul to bodies join,
Thousands shall wish their lives below
Had been as short as thine.

CHARLES WESLEY

A CHILD

H ER voice was like the song of birds ;
Her eyes were like the stars ;
Her little waving hands were like
Birds' wings that beat the bars.

And when those waving hands were still,—
 Her soul had fled away,—
The music faded from the air,
 And color from the day.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

FROM THE DIARY OF THE REVND
PHILIP HENRY, 1661

July 3. The first day of my son John's putting on a coat, clothe him, Lord, with grace, with righteousness, with Christ Jesus.

July 18. Little one very ill, but the lord had mercy. O help us to sit loose from him for his breath is in his nostrils, lest overloving end in overgrieving. Father, spare him to us if it seem good in thine eyes, nevertheless not as wee will but as thou wilt. only let his soul bee saved in the day of the lord Jesus.

May 3, 1663. This day my son John is two years old, blessed bee God for the mercy of

this day two year to mother and child and mee
in them.

April 10, 1665. The first day of my son John's
going to school, hee sets out upon a long journey,
if hee have life and capacity, wherein the lord
bee his good speed. Amen!

In January 1666 I entered him at the Free
School, being yet in Coates, w^{ch} had never been
known there before.

Within 3 weekes his Grand-father dy'd, on
which occasion hee was put into Breeches being
to put on mourning.

Mar. 24 being Sabbath-day hee sickened of
the Measils, attended with a Feaver, whereof
hee dy'd. Apl. 12 about sun-sett, and was bury'd
the Munday after, towards the upper end of the
Middle-Ile in Whitchurch church.

The act requiring to bury in woolen being then
new, was generally observ'd though soon after
layd aside, and hee wrapt in white flannen to
satisfy the law. Hee was remarkable for fowr
things.

1. forwardnes in learning having all the three
requisites, Apprehension, Judgment, Memory,
even beyond his Age, and withal a great love
to it, never seeking at any time to stay from
school. *praeterquæ cætatem nil puerile fuit.*

2. tenderness of disposition, apt to melt into
teares at the least show of displeasure though
but in a frown.

3. patience under Correction which hee had

not often bec. hee did not deserve it, and when hee did his poenitence prævented it, if not altogether yet in the severity of it. And this consideration taught me something, by way of Instance, in bearing the will of God in taking him from mee.

4. Love to his Brother and Sisters, when Matthew sickned first, hee went to bed with him of his own accord, sooner than ordinary, and wept over him.

He was of a strong healthy constitution, not smaying for cold in school, like other children, as his master hath told me. Hee was full of action, stirring; always doing something, and what hee did, hee did with all his might. His Grandfather made him sole Executor of his will and heir of his real estate, saying oft, I have a love for that child, and the law making mee his tutor and gardian, the dispose of things at least for present fell to mee besides Intention, and hee under God the Instrument, and when that was done, hee fell asleep. His sickness quickly took away the use of his understanding, hee talkt much, most of his Bookes and School fellowes, and once repeated distinctly the 4th commandm^t. Hee had learnt without book and would rehearse often the following verses (printed in Mr. White's book of the power of God.)

“ Not twice twelve yeares full told, a weary breath,
I have exchanged for a happy death.

Short was my life, the longer is my rest,
 God takes them soonest whom hee loveth best,
 Hee that is born today and dyes tomorrow,
 Loses some howres of joy but monthes of sorrow ;
 Other diseases often come to grieve us,
 Death strikes but once, and that stroke doth
 relieve us."

My hope is, through the everlasting Covenant of Mercy, that I shall meet him again with comfort, at the right hand of Jesus Christ at the last day.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT DYING OF A COUGH

O FAIREST flow'r no sooner blown but blasted,
 Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
 Summer's chief honour if thou hadst outlasted
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry ;
 For he being amorous on that lovely dye
 That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss
 But kill'd alas, and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

But oh why didst thou not stay here below
 To bless us with thy Heav'n-lov'd innocence,
 To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
 To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
 Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,

To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart ?
 But thou canst best perform that office where
 thou art.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
 Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
 And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild ;
 Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
 And render him with patience what he lent :
 This if thou do he will an offspring give,
 That till the world's last end shall make thy
 name to live.

JOHN MILTON

AN EPITAPH

A VIRGIN blossom in her May
 Of youth and virtues turn'd to clay,
 Rich Earth accomplish'd with those graces
 That adorn Saints in heavenly places,
 Let not Death boast his conquering power,
 She'll rise a Star, that fell a Flower.

ANON.

HOW changed, dear friend, are thy part and
 thy child's,
 He bends above thy cradle now, or holds

His warning finger out to be thy guide ;
Thou art the nursling now ; he watches thee
Slow learning, one by one, the secret things
Which are to him used sights of every day ;
He smiles to see thy wondering glances con-
The grass and pebbles of the spirit-world,
To thee miraculous ; and he will teach
Thy knees their due observances of prayer.

Children are God's apostles, day by day
Sent forth to preach of love, and hope, and
peace ;
Nor hath thy babe his mission left undone.
To me, at least, his going hence hath given
Serener thoughts and nearer to the skies,
And opened a new fountain in my heart
For thee, my friend, and all : and, O, if Death
More near approaches, meditates, and clasps
Even now some dearer, more reluctant hand,
God, strengthen Thou my faith, that I may see
That 'tis Thine angel, who, with loving haste,
Unto the service of the inner shrine
Doth waken Thy belovéd with a kiss !

From a poem, "On the Death of a Friend's
Child"

J. R. LOWELL

P RINCESS ANNE whose tiny coffin lies be-
side her baby brother, near to those of the
other brother, Henry, Duke of Gloucester, and

the sister, Elizabeth of Bohemia, both of whom “lived to years,” died in 1640 at the early age of four. Fuller supplies us with a story about the death-bed of this “very pregnant lady” of four years old. Being told to pray by those about her at the last, “I am not able,” saith she, “to say my long prayer (meaning the Lord’s prayer) but I will say my short one: Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, lest I sleep the sleep of death.” This done the little lamb gave up the ghost.

From “The Roll Call of Westminster Abbey.”

G. T. MURRAY

OUR leaves are shaken from the Tree,
 Our hopes laid low,
 That after our Spring-nurslings, we
 May long to go.

The warm love-nest our little Doves leave
 With helpless moan,
 As they for us at heart would grieve
 In heaven—alone !

The tender Shepherd beckoningly
 Our Lambs doth hold,
 That we may take our own when He
 Makes up the fold.

GERALD MASSEY

(“My Lyrical Life,” Second Series, p. 171)

BURIED to-day.

When the soft green buds are bursting out,
And up on the south-wind comes a shout
Of village boys and girls at play
In the mild spring evening grey

Taken away.

Sturdy of heart and stout of limb,
From eyes that drew half their light from him,
And put low, low, underneath the clay,
In his spring,—on this spring day.

Passes away

All the pride of boy-life begun,
All the hope of life yet to run ;
Who dares to question when one saith “ Nay.”
Murmur not—only pray.

Enters to-day

Another body in churchyard sod,
Another soul on the life in God.
His Christ was buried—and lives alway :
Trust Him, and go your way.

MRS. CRAIK (DINAH MARIA MULOCK)

FATHER CHRISTMAS IN FAMINE
STREET

(AN APPEAL FOR THE CHILDREN)

Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not.

WHEN Father Christmas went down Famine Street,

He saw two little sisters : one was trying
To lift the other, pallid, wasted, dying,
Within an arch, beyond the slush and sleet.
From out the glazing eyes a glimmer sweet
Leapt, as in answer to the other's sighing,
While came a murmur,
Don't 'ee keep on crying—
I wants to die : you'll get my share to eat.

Her knell was tolled by joy-bells of the city
Hymning the birth of Jesus, Lord of Pity,
Lover of children, Shepherd of Compassion.
Said Father Christmas, while his eyes grew dim,
They do His business—if in thrifty fashion—
They let the little children go to Him.

THEODORE WATTS DUNTON

EVELYN

If I could know
That here about the place where last you
played,—
Within this room, and yonder in the shade
Of branches low,—
Your spirit lingered, I would never go,
But evermore a hermit pace the round
Of sunny paths across this garden ground,
And o'er the fleckered lawn
Whereon your baby chariot was drawn,
And round these lonely walls,
Where no sound ever falls
So pretty as your prattle or your crow,—
If I could only know !

If I could know
That to some distant clime or planet rare
Sweet souls like thine repair,
Where love's own fountains fail not as they flow,—
I'd be a traveller, and would ever go,
Day after day, the selfsame road,
Leaving behind this desolate abode,
My head upon my pillow only lay
To dream myself still further on the way,
Until at last I rest,
Clasping my little daughter to my breast,
Though half eternity were wasted so,—
If I could only know !

If I could only know
That you a child with childlike ways remain,
I'd never wish to be a man again,
But only try to grow
As childlike, using all the idle toys
That you and I have played with, till their noise
Brought back the echoes of your merry laugh,
When paper windmill whirled upon its staff,
Or painted ball went rolling on the floor,
Or puss peeped out behind the door,
Or watch, held half in fear,
With its mysterious pulses thrill'd your ear :
All manly occupation I'd forego,
If I could only know !

If I could know
That henceforth in some pure eternal sphere,
The little life that grew so swiftly here
Would still expand and grow,
How should I strive against my wasting years,
With toil from sun to sun, and midnight tears,
To build my soul up to the height of yours,
And catch the light that lures,
The inspiration that impels,
The strength that dwells,
Beyond the bounds of earthly cares and fears,
Beyond this bitter woe,—
If I could only know !

Alas ! What do I know ?
I know your world scarce compassed yonder
stone—
As little seems my own !
I know you never knew unhappiness—
Would I could mourn the less !
I know you never saw Death's darker side—
The shore where we abide !
I know you never felt the nameless dread—
Ah, but if mine were fled !
I know you never heard a lover's vow—
And I'm your lover now !
I know no answer to my wail can come—
Let me be dumb.

ROSSITER JOHNSON

THE MOTHER'S DREAM

I 'D a dream to-night
As I fell asleep,
Oh ! the touching sight
Makes me still to weep :
Of my little lad,
Gone to leave me sad,
Ay, the child I had,
But was not to keep.

As in heaven high
I my child did seek,
There, in train, came by
Children fair and meek,

Each in lily white,
With a lamp alight ;
Each was clear to sight,
But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,
Came my child in turn,
But the lamp he had
Oh ! it did not burn ;
He, to clear my doubt,
Said, half-turned about,
“ Your tears put it out ;
Mother, never mourn.”

W. BARNES

EPITAPH ON MARIA SCOTT, WHO DIED
IN 1836 AT THE AGE OF SEVEN—IN
ELY CATHEDRAL

THE cup of life just with her lips she prest,
Found the taste bitter, and declined the
rest.

Averse then, from the face of day
She softly sighed her little soul away.

ALLER SEELEN

S TREW violets about the floor,
And scour the brazen platters bright ;
For one who aye was here before
Will come once more tonight.

Draw the tall settle to the fire
And stir the sunken logs to glow ;
Hang the horn-lanthorne by the byre,
And sweep away the sprinkling snow.

Set the old playthings in their place—
The china lamb, the wooden sword,
The chessmen in the painted case,
The bugle with the scarlet cord,

The plate with clustered rosebuds gay,
The little cup all gold and white—
Reach down his ring-dove's cage, and lay
The frozen swallow out of sight.

So far to come, so far to go—
So cold, so black this midnight is—
So light the footsteps sound and low ;
We shall not hear the sound of his.

Set wider still the open door ;
Sweep yet again the snow, the sleet :
Bring out the white, warm cloak he wore,
White furs to wrap his little feet. . . .

O do not stir . . . O do not speak . . .
Be still, with never sound or sign ;
Let me but feel the cool, soft cheek
Pressed once again to mine.

ROSAMOND MARRIOTT WATSON

ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE MAHALA ASHCRAFT

“ **L**ITTLE Haly! Little Haly!” cheeps the robin in the tree ;
“ Little Haly ! ” sighs the clover ; “ Little Haly ! ” moans the bee ;
“ Little Haly ! Little Haly ! ” calls the kill-deer at twilight ;
And the katydids and crickets hollers “ Haly ! ” all the night.

The sunflowers and the hollyhawks droops over the garden fence ;
The old path down the garden-walks still holds her foot-prints’ dents ;
And the well-sweep’s swingin’ bucket seems to wait for her to come
And start it on its wortery errant down the old bee-gum.

The beehives all is quiet ; and the little Jersey steer,
When any one comes nigh it, acts so lonesome-like and queer ;

And the little Banty chickens kindo' cutters
faint and low,
Like the hand that now was feedin' 'em was one
they didn't know.

They's sorrow in the wavin' leaves of all the
apple-trees ;
And sorrow in the harvest-sheaves, and sorrow
in the breeze :
And sorrow in the twitter of the swallows round
the shed ;
And all the song her red-bird sings is " Little
Haly's dead ! "

The medder 'pears to miss her, and the pathway
through the grass,
Whare the dewdrops ust to kiss her little bare
feet as she passed ;
And the old pin in the gate-post seems to kindo'-
sorto' doubt
That Haly's little sunburnt hands 'll ever pull it
out.

Did her father er her mother ever love her
more'n me,
Er her sisters er her brother prize her love more
tendurly ?
I question—and what answer?—only tears, and
tears alone,
And ev'ry neghbor's eyes is full o' tear-drops as
my own.

“Little Haly! Little Haly!” cheeps the robin
 in the tree;
 “Little Haly!” sighs the clover; “Little Haly!”
 moans the bee;
 “Little Haly! Little Haly!” calls the killdeer
 at twilight,
 And the katydids and crickets hollers “Haly!”
 all the night.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

THE TOY CROSS

MY little boy at Christmas-tide
 Made me a toy cross;
 Two sticks he did, in boyish pride,
 With brazen nail emboss.

Ah me! how soon on either side
 His dying bed’s true cross
 She and I were crucified,
 Bemoaning our life-loss!

But He, whose arms in death spread wide
 Upon the holy tree,
 Were clasped about him where he died—
 Clasped for eternity!

From “A Little Child’s Monument”
 HON. RODEN NOEL

THE DEAD BOY

(FROM THE GREEK)

THY tresses had not yet been shorn,
Thy first three years not yet had run,
When Nicasis, one bitter morn,
Held to her breast what held her son,
Thy little coffin, and thy grave
Heard her, and heard thy sire lament,
But by the Acheronian wave,
Shall thy youth, Cleudicus, be spent.

ANDREW LANG

THE LAST PORTAGE

I 'M sleepin' las' night w'en I dream a dream
An' a wonderful wan it seem—
For I'm off on de road I was never see,
Too long an' hard for a man lak me,
So ole he can only wait de call
Is sooner or later come to all.

De night is dark an' de portage dere
Got plaintee o' log lyin' ev'ryw'ere,
Black bush aroun' on de right an' lef',
A step from de road an' you lose yow'se'f,
De moon and de star above is gone,
Yet somet'ing tell me I must go on.

An' off in front of me as I go,
Light as a dreef of de fallin' snow—

Who is dat little boy dancin' dere
 Can see hees w'ite dress an' curly hair,
 An' almos' touch heem, so near to me,
 In an' out dere among de tree?

An' den I'm hearin' a voice is say,
 "Come alone, fader, don't mind de way.
 De boss on de camp he sen' for you,
 So your leetle boy's going to guide you t'roo,
 It's easy for me, for de road I know,
 'Cos I travel it many long year ago."

An' oh! mon Dieu! w'en he turn hees head
 I'm seein' de face of ma boy is dead—
 Dead wit' de young blood in hees vein—
 An' dere he's comin' wance more again
 Wit' de curly hair, an' dark-blue eye,
 So lak de blue of de summer sky—

An' now no more for de road I care,
 An' slippery log lyin' ev'ryw'ere—
 De swamp on de valley, de mountain too,
 But climb it jus' as I use to do—
 Don't stop on de road, for I need no res'
 So long as I see de leetle w'ite dress.

An' I foller it on, an' wance in a w'ile
 He turn again wit' de baby smile,
 An' say, "Dear fader, I'm here you see,
 We're bote togeder, jus' you an' me—
 Very dark to you, but to me it's light,
 De road we travel so far to-night.

“ De boss on de camp w’ere I alway stay
Since ever de time I was go away,
He welcome de poores’ man dat call,
But love de leetle wan bes’ of all,
So dat’s de reason I spik for you
An’ come to-night for to bring you t’roo.”

Lak de young Jesu w’en he’s here below
De face of ma leetle son look jus’ so—
Den off beyon’, on de bush I see
De w’ite dress fadin’ among de tree—
Was it a dream I dream las’ night
Is goin’ away on de morning light?

WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND, M.D.

MATER DOLOROSA

BECAUSE of little low-laid heads all crowned
With golden hair,
For ever more all fair young brows to me
A halo wear:
I kiss them reverently—alas I know
The stains I bear.

Because of dear but close-shut holy eyes
Of heaven’s own blue,
All little eyes do fill my own with tears
Whate’er their hue.
And motherly I gaze their innocent
Clear depths into.

Because of little pallid lips that once
 My name did call,
 No childish voice, in vain appeal, upon
 My ear doth fall.
 I count it all my joy their joys to share
 And sorrows small.

Because of little dimpled, cherished hands
 Which folded lie,
 All little hands henceforth to me do have
 A pleading cry ;
 I clasp them as they were small wandering birds
 Lured home to fly.

Because of little death-cold feet, for earth's
 Rough roads unmeet,
 I'd journey leagues to save from sin or harm
 Such little feet ;
 And count the lowest service done for them
 So sacred-sweet.

M. K. FIELD

EPITAPH ON ONE OF WORDSWORTH'S CHILDREN

ERE Sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
 Death came with friendly care :
 The opening bud to Heaven conveyed
 And bade it blossom there.

S. T. COLERIDGE

THE Abbey (Westminster) is full of the remembrances of great men and famous women. But it is also full of the remembrances of little boys and girls whose death shot a pang through the hearts of those who loved them, and who wished that they should never be forgotten. Almost the earliest royal monument in this abbey is of a beautiful little deaf and dumb girl of five years old—the Princess Catherine, daughter of King Henry III, who loved her dearly. She has not been forgotten, nor have her two little brothers, and perhaps four little nephews, who were buried close to her, as if to keep her company. And so there are two small tombs in Henry VII's chapel of the two infant daughters of King James I. Over one of them are some touching lines written by an American lady, which all mothers should read. And to these tombs of these two little girls were brought in after days by their nephew, Charles II, the bones of the two young murdered Princes, which in his time were discovered at the foot of the staircase in the Tower.

And there is in the Chapel of St. Nicholas another tomb of a little child that died from a mistake of its nurse; and we know from her will that she never ceased to lament her little darling, and begged very urgently, if possible to be buried beside it. And there is in the Cloisters the monument mentioned on a previous occasion, which contains only these words, “Jane Lister, dear

childe," with the date and record of her brother's previous death. It is an inscription which goes to the heart of every one. It was in the year 1688, just a month before the great English Revolution, but the parents thought only of "Jane Lister" their "dear childe."

From "Sermons for Children"

DEAN STANLEY

THE MORNING-GLORY

WE wreathed about our darling's head
The morning-glory bright ;
Her little face looked out beneath,
So full of life and light,
So lit as with a sunrise,
That we could only say,
" She is the morning-glory true,
And her poor types are they."

So always from that happy time
We called her by their name,
And very fitting did it seem—
For, sure as morning came,
Behind her cradle bars she smiled
To catch the first faint ray,
As from the trellis smiles the flower
And opens to the day.

But not so beautiful they rear
Their airy cups of blue,
As turned her sweet eyes to the light,
Brimmed with sleep's tender dew ;

And not so close their tendrils fine
Round their supports are thrown,
As those dear arms whose outstretched plea
Clasped all hearts to her own.

We used to think how she had come,
Even as comes the flower,
The last and perfect added gift,
To crown Love's morning hour ;
And how in her was imaged forth
The love we could not say,
As on the little dewdrops round
Shines back the heart of day.

We never could have thought, O God,
That she must wither up,
Almost before a day was flown,
Like the morning-glory's cup ;
We never thought to see her droop
Her fair and noble head,
Till she lay stretched before our eyes,
Wilted, and cold, and dead !

The morning-glory's blossoming
Will soon be coming round—
We see the rows of heart-shaped leaves
Upspringing from the ground ;
The tender things the winter killed
Renew again their birth,
But the glory of our morning
Has passed away from earth.

O Earth ! in vain our aching eyes
 Stretch over thy green plain !
 Too harsh thy dews, too gross thine air
 Her spirit to sustain ;
 But up in groves of Paradise
 Full surely we shall see
 Our morning-glory beautiful
 Twine round our dear Lord's knee.

MARIA LOWELL

WHY should we weep or mourn, angelic boy,
 For such thou wert ere from our sight removed,
 Holy, and ever dutiful—beloved
 From day to day with never-ceasing joy,
 And hopes as dear as could the heart employ
 In aught to earth pertaining ? Death has proved
 His might, nor less his mercy, as behoved—
 Death conscious that he only could destroy
 The bodily frame. That beauty is laid low
 To moulder in a far-off field of Rome ;
 But Heaven is now, blest child, thy spirit's home :
 When such divine communion, which we know,
 Is felt, thy Roman burial-place will be
 Surely a sweet remembrancer of Thee.

W. WORDSWORTH

THIS little vault, this narrow room,
 Of Love and Beauty is the tomb ;
The dawning beam, that 'gan to clear
Our clouded sky, lies darken'd here,
For ever set to us : by Death
Sent to enflame the world beneath.
'Twas but a bud, yet did contain
More sweetness than shall spring again ;
A budding Star, that might have grown
Into a sun when it had blown.
This hopeful Beauty did create
New life in Love's declining state ;
But now his empire ends, and we
From fire and wounding darts are free ;
His brand, his bow, let no man fear :
The flames, the arrows, all lie here.

THOMAS CAREW

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

THERE is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
 And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

“ Shall I have nought that is fair ! ” saith he ;
“ Have nought but the bearded grain ?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet
 to me,
I will give them all back again.”

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves ;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

“ My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,”
The Reaper said, and smiled ;
“ Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where he was once a child.

“ They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear.”

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love ;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day ;
’Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

LONGFELLOW

THEY say he is an angel now,¹
Who knows what that may be?
I only feel, I only know
My child is lost to me.

I know that there were little feet
Which never, never more
Will sound about the house, or meet
My own feet at the door.

And little hands, that will not twine
Ever again, or weave
Their nestling fingers into mine,
Nor pluck me by the sleeve.

A little child I used to kiss,
And scold, too, now and then,
And this was yesterday ; and this
Will never be again.

His little naughtinesses dear,
Each darling wilful whim,
Those have no place in heaven, I fear ;
And these I loved in him.

O mother, mother, hide away
The little broken toy,
Never again to school or play
Will come our buried boy.

¹ Rowland, eldest son of Robert, first Earl of Lytton, died on the 26th July 1871, aged six years.

And let the little letters be,
 His lessons all are done,
 There's nothing, nothing left for thee
 To teach thy seraph son.

ROBERT, EARL OF LYTTON

EPITAPH

(FROM THE GREEK OF LUCIAN)

ON A CHILD OF FIVE

ME Callimachus, a five-years-old child whose spirit knew not grief, pitiless Death snatched away ; but weep thou not for me ; for little was my share in life, and little in life's ills.

Translated by J. W. MACKAIL

UNDER THE VIOLETS

HER hands are cold ; her face is white ;
 No more her pulses come and go ;
 Her eyes are shut to life and light ;—
 Fold the white vesture, snow on snow,
 And lay her where the violets blow.

But not beneath a graven stone,
 To plead for tears with alien eyes
 A slender cross of wood alone
 Shall say, that here a maiden lies
 In peace beneath the peaceful skies.

And gray old trees of hugest limb
Shall wheel their circling shadows round,
To make the scorching sunlight dim
That drinks the greenness from the ground,
And drop their dead leaves on her mound.

When o'er their boughs the squirrels run,
And through their leaves the robins call,
And, ripening in the autumn sun,
The acorns and the chestnuts fall,
Doubt not that she will heed them all.

For her the morning choir shall sing
Its matins from the branches high,
And every minstrel voice of Spring,
That trills beneath the April sky,
Shall greet her with its earliest cry.

When, turning round their dial-track,
Eastward the lengthening shadows pass,
Her little mourners, clad in black,
The crickets, sliding through the grass,
Shall pipe for her an evening mass.

At last the rootlets of the trees
Shall find the prison where she lies,
And bear the buried dust they seize
In leaves and blossoms to the skies,
So may the soul that warmed it rise !

If any, born of kindlier blood,
 Should ask, What maiden lies below ?
 Say only this ; A tender bud,
 That tried to blossom in the snow,
 Lies withered where the violets blow.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

EARLY DEATH

SHE pass'd away, like morning dew,
 Before the sun was high ;
 So brief her time, she scarcely knew
 The meaning of a sigh.

As round the rose its soft perfume,
 Sweet love around her floated ;
 Admired she grew—while mortal doom
 Crept on, unfear'd, unnoted.

Love was her guardian angel here,
 But love to Death resign'd her ;
 Tho' Love was kind, why should we fear,
 But holy Death is kinder ?

HARTLEY COLERIDGE

OUR TRYST

I KNOW not where my darling moves—
 Somewhere with Christ !
 I only know his young heart loves,
 Somehow like Christ—

And that some day my boy and I
 Shall keep our tryst,
 Together through Eternity,
 And, with us, Christ.

F. I. L.

TO A DYING INFANT

SLEEP, little baby, sleep !
 Not in thy cradle bed,
 Not on thy mother's breast
 Henceforth shall be thy rest,
 But with the quiet dead !

Yes ! with the quiet dead,
 Baby, thy rest shall be !
 Oh ! many a weary wight,
 Weary of life and light,
 Would fain lie down with thee.

Flee, little tender nursling !
 Flee to thy grassy nest ;
 There the first flowers shall blow
 The first pure flake of snow
 Shall fall upon thy breast.

Peace ! peace ! the little bosom
Labours with shortening breath :—
Peace ! peace ! that tremulous sigh
Speaks his departure nigh !
Those are the damps of death.

I've seen thee in thy beauty,
A thing all health and glee ;
But never then wert thou
So beautiful as now,
Baby, thou seem'st to me !

Thine upturn'd eyes glazed over,
Like harebells wet with dew ;
Already veiled and hid
By the convulsèd lid
Their pupils, darkly blue.

Thy little mouth half open—
Thy soft lip quivering,
As if like Summer-air,
Ruffling the rose-leaves, there,
Thy soul was fluttering.

Mount up, immortal essence !
Young spirit, haste, depart !—
And is this death ?—Dread thing !
If such thy visiting,
How beautiful thou art !

Oh ! I could gaze for ever
Upon thy waxen face ;

So passionless, so pure !
The little shrine was sure
An angel's dwelling-place.

Thou wepest, childless mother !
Aye, weep—'twill ease thy heart ;—
He was thy first-born son,
Thy first, thine only one,
'Tis hard from him to part.

“ Now like a dew-drop shrined
Within a crystal stone,
Thou’rt safe in Heaven, my dove !
Safe with the Source of Love,
The Everlasting One !

“ And when the hour arrives,
From flesh that sets me free,
Thy spirit may await,
The first at Heaven’s gate,
To meet and welcome me ! ”

MRS. SOUTHEY

FOR she was dead. There, upon her little bed, she lay at rest. The solemn stillness was no marvel now.

She was dead. No sleep so beautiful and calm, so free from trace of pain, so fair to look upon. She seemed a creature fresh from the hand of God, and waiting for the breath of life ; not one who had lived and suffered death.

Her couch was dressed with here and there some winter berries and green leaves, gathered in a spot she had been used to favour. "When I die, put near me something that has loved the light, and had the sky above it always." These were her words.

She was dead. Dear, gentle, patient, noble Nell was dead. Her little bird—a poor slight thing the pressure of a finger would have crushed—was stirring nimbly in its cage; and the strong heart of its child-mistress was mute and motionless for ever.

Where were the traces of her early cares, her sufferings, and fatigues? All gone. Sorrow was dead indeed in her, but peace and perfect happiness were born; imaged in her tranquil beauty and profound repose.

And still her former self lay there, unaltered in this change. Yes. The old fireside had smiled upon that same sweet face; it had passed like a dream through haunts of misery and care; at the door of the poor schoolmaster on the summer evening, before the furnace fire upon the cold wet night, at the still bed-side of the dying boy, there had been the same mild lovely look. So shall we know the angels in their majesty, after death.

From "Little Nell's Death"

("Old Curiosity Shop")

C. DICKENS

THE CHANGELING¹

I HAD a little daughter,
And she was given to me
To lead me gently backward
To the Heavenly Father's knee,
That I, by the force of nature,
Might in some dim wise divine
The depths of His infinite patience
To this wayward soul of mine.

I know not how others saw her,
But to me she was wholly fair,
And the light of the heaven she came from
Still lingered and gleamed in her hair :
For it was as wavy and golden,
And as many changes took,
As the shadows of sun-gilt ripples
On the yellow bed of a brook.

To what can I liken her smiling
Upon me, her kneeling lover,
How it leaped from her lips to her eyelids,
And dimpled her wholly over,
Till her outstretched hands smiled also,
And I almost seemed to see
The very heart of her mother
Sending sun through her veins to me !

¹ The Poet lost his eldest child, Blanche, a little girl of fourteen months, early in March 1847.

She had been with us scarce a twelvemonth,
And it hardly seemed a day,
When a troop of wandering angels
Stole my little daughter away ;
Or perhaps those heavenly Zingari
But loosed the hampering strings,
And when they had opened her cage-door,
My little bird used her wings.

But they left in her stead a changeling,
A little angel child,
That seems like her bud in full blossom,
And smiles as she never smiled :
When I wake in the morning, I see it
Where she always used to lie,
And I feel as weak as a violet
Alone 'neath the awful sky ;

As weak, yet as trustful also ;
For the whole year long I see
All the wonders of faithful nature
Still worked for the love of me ;
Winds wander, and dews drip earthward,
Rain falls, suns rise and set,
Earth whirls, and all but to prosper
A poor little violet.

This child is not mine as the first was,
I cannot sing it to rest,
I cannot lift it up fatherly
And bless it upon my breast ;

Yet it lies in my little one's cradle
And sits in my little one's chair,
And the light of the heaven she's gone to
Transfigures its golden hair.

J. R. LOWELL

ON A CHILD'S TOMB

THINE was a blessed flight,
Ere sorrow faded and ere sin could slay !
No weary way was thine, no arduous fight,
And but an hour on earth, of labour light,
With hire for all the day. ANON.

BIRTH AND DEATH

SHE came to us in storm and snow—
The little one we held so dear—
And all the world was full of woe,
And war and famine plagued the year ;
And ships were wrecked and fields were
drowned
And thousands died for lack of bread ;
In such a troubled time we found
That sweet mouth to be kissed and fed.

But oh, we were a happy pair,
Through all the war and want and woe ;
Though not a heart appeared to care,
And no one even seemed to know.

She left us in the blithe increase
 Of glowing fruit and ripening corn,
 When all the nations were at peace,
 And plenty held a brimming horn—
 When we at last were well to do,
 And life was sweet, and earth was gay ;
 In that glad time of cloudless blue
 Our little darling passed away.

And oh, we were a wretched pair
 In all the gladness and the glow ;
 And not a heart appeared to care,
 And no one even seemed to know.

WILLIAM CANTON

OUT IN THE DARK

O H, up the brae, and up and up, beyont the
 fairy thorn,
 It's there they have my baby laid, that died when
 he was born.
 Afore the priest could christen him to save his
 soul, he died ;
 “It never lived at all,” they said.—’Twas livin’ in
 my side.

For many a day an’ many a night, an’ weary night
 and day,
 I kent him livin’ at my heart, I carena’ what
 they say.

For many a day an' many a night I wearied o'
unrest,
But now I'm sore to hae my wean back hidden in
my breast.

He'll sure be thinkin' long for me, an' wearyin'
his lone
Up in thon corner by the whins wi' neither cross
nor stone :
Ay, tho' I'd died wi' him itself, they wouldna'
let us be—
The corner o' a field for him, the holy ground for
me.

Thare many a wean that lies wi' him, and none
that got a name,
Thare many a wife, hard put till it, was glad that
dead they came,
Ay, many a man that scarcely minds a child o'
his lies there :
But och ! 'tis cruel hard to quit the first you'd
ever bear.

The graves are all that tiny that they'd hardly
raise a mound,
And couples o' a Sunday do be coortin' on thon
ground,
An' thare none that thinks upon them ; but my
heart'll be there still,
On the sod among the bracken an' the whins
upon the hill.

I'd be feared to come o' night there, for the hill
is fairy ground :
But thare may be more nor fairies dancin' in the
fairy ground :
Och, an' if I only thought it! sure I'd let them
do their worst,
An' I'd go to see my baby, tho' I be to be
accursed.

But I'll never reach my wean now, neither here
nor in the sod,
An' I'm better wi' the Christians an' the souls
that's saved for God—
Och, to feel his fingers on me, an' to clasp him
when he smiled !
Sure ye'd think there'd be one heaven for the
mother an' the child.

STEPHEN LUCIUS GWYNN

I HAVE a son, a third sweet son : his age I
cannot tell,
For they reckon not by years or months where he
is gone to dwell.
To us for fourteen anxious months his infant
smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth, and went to
live in heaven.

I cannot tell what form is his, what looks he
weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crown his shining
seraph brow.
The thoughts that fill his sinless soul, the bliss
which he doth feel,
Are numbered with the secret things which God
will not reveal.
But I know (for God hath told me this) that he is
now at rest,
Where other blessed infants be, on their Saviour's
loving breast.
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of
flesh,
But his sleep is blessed with endless dreams of
joy for ever fresh.
I know the angels fold him close beneath their
glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of
heaven's divinest things.
I know that we shall meet our babe, (his mother
dear and I,)
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from
every eye.
Whate'er befalls his brethren twain, *his* bliss can
never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but *his* is
certain peace.
It may be that the tempter's wiles their souls
from bliss may sever,
But, if our poor faith fail not, *he* must be ours for ever.

When we think of what our darling is, and what
we still must be,—
When we muse on that world's perfect bliss, and
this world's misery,—
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel
this grief and pain,—
Oh! we'd rather lose our other two, than have
him here again.

From "The Three Sons"

E. MOULTRIE

BY November Lawrence returned to Lahore, visiting all the civil stations on the way, and bringing with him an infant son—Edward Hayes—who had been born in June at Simla. It was a lovely child, which had seemed from its very birth to call forth from beneath the rugged exterior of his father that vein of tenderness which those who knew him well knew was always there. A child, particularly a young one, seemed often able to calm John Lawrence when he was most ruffled, and to cheer him when he was most wearied with the anxieties and the vexations of his daily work. This babe had been delicate from its birth—so delicate, that its mother feared now to expose it to the rough camp life which formed a principal part of the winter's work in the Punjab. Accordingly, while the father was roaming about his province in tents, the mother stayed at home to tend it.

“ But, howsoe'er it was,
After a lingering, ere she was aware,
Like a caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.”

It was a crushing sorrow, and not to the mother alone. It was the first time that death had come into the Lawrence family. The strong man was broken down ; and to the astonishment of those that did not know him well—but only to those—he was seen weeping like a child, as he followed the body to the grave.

From “ Life of Lord Lawrence ”

H. BOSWORTH SMITH

UNDER THE VIOLETS

UNDER the violets, blue and sweet,
Where low the willow droops and weeps,
Where children tread with timid feet,
When twilight o'er the forest creeps,
She sleeps—my little darling sleeps.

Breathe low and soft, O wind ! breathe low
Where so much loveliness is laid !
Pour out thy heart in strains of woe,
O bird ! that in the willow's shade
Sing'st till the stars do pale and fade.

It may be that to other eyes,
As in the happy days of old,
The sun doth every morning rise
O'er mountain summits tipped with gold,
And set where sapphire seas are rolled ;

But I am so hedged round with woe,
 This glory I no more can see.
 O weary heart, that throbbest so,
 Thou hast but this one wish—to be
 A little dust beneath the tree.

I would thou hadst thy wish to-day,
 And we were lying side by side
 With her who took our life away
 The heavy day whereon she died.
 O grave! I would thy gates were wide.

EDWARD YOUNG

TO EDITH MAY SOUTHEY

(DEDICATION OF "A TALE OF PARAGUAY")

A CHILD more welcome, by indulgent Heaven
 Never to parents' tears and prayers was
 given:
 For scarcely eight months at thy happy birth
 Had pass'd, since of thy sister we were left, . . .
 Our first-born and our only babe, bereft.
 Too fair a flower she was for this rude earth!
 The features of her beauteous infancy
 Have faded from me, like a passing cloud,
 Or like the glories of an evening sky:
 And seldom hath my tongue pronounced her
 name

Since she was summon'd to a happier sphere.
But that dear love so deeply wounded then,
I in my soul with silent faith sincere
Devoutly cherish till we meet again.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

THE DEATH OF PAUL DOMBEY

“ **N**OW lay me down,” he said, “ and Floy, come close to me, and let me see you ! ”

Sister and brother wound their arms around each other, and the golden light came streaming in, and fell upon them, locked together.

“ How fast the river runs, between its green banks and the rushes, Floy ! but it’s very near the sea. I hear the waves ! They always said so ! ”

Presently he told her that the motion of the boat upon the stream was lulling him to rest. How green the banks were now, how bright the flowers growing on them, and how tall the rushes ! Now the boat was out at sea, but gliding smoothly on. And now there was a shore before him. Who stood on the bank !

He put his hands together, as he had been used to do at his prayers. He did not remove his arms to do it ; but they saw him fold them so, behind her neck.

"Mamma is like you, Floy. I know her by the face! but tell them that the print upon the stairs at school is not divine enough. The light about the head is shining on me as I go!"

The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion! The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death! Oh thank God all who see it, for that older fashion yet, of Immortality! And look upon us, angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean!

From "Dombey & Son"

C. DICKENS

NAOMI

FIVE years old. Five years ago
God planted her here in another's stead.
A little Naomi, one year old,
Died ; and in place of the Naomi dead,
God gave the Naomi that we know.

Know? Can we claim her still for our own,
So still and silent our comrade is,
No sunny laughter, no sweet replies—
Is she asleep, or awake in bliss?
Does she tremble to sleep alone?

Last month, with her coy head poised awry,
She stood in school by an open book,
Blue eyes, blue ribbons, and golden hair,
And on her forehead a wistful look,
A wondering, “Can this be Naomi?”

Naomi, always left to her will,
Playing about through the long spring days,
Picking violets in the fields,
Primroses in the green hedge-ways,
Never idle, and never still.

Naomi, with a voice that thrilled
High and sweet in the lanes as she sped
Past the yellowing fields towards home,
Scorning grandly a leading hand,
Laughing softly when she had fled.

Yellowing fields, that she sees no more
Bow themselves down at the reaper’s hand—
Before they ripen’d, Naomi’s voice
Paused—came faintly—then made a stand,
As in the porch of an open door.

The door must have opened and she gone through,
No more in the lane does Naomi call;
The trees are dusty, the corn is ripe—
The poppies are nodding—it is all
Just as it was, and the sky as blue.

But silence for her, for she sleeps alone.
The moon is riding in bays of blue,

This sultry harvest night she looks
 Down upon Naomi whom we knew,
 Silvers the place where the child is gone.

Call her Naomi—she was too young
 To change to Marah—she knew no tears ;
 Over the garden hedge she lies,
 And will not stir through the months and years,
 Nor hear the plaint of the nightingale's song.

But, Lord, it is strange to think to-night,
 When the harvest-moon lights up their bed,
 That little Naomi, five years old,
 And the baby Naomi, five years dead,
 Know Thee, and bask in the unseen light.

And strange to think, that between us now
 And Thy great secret, there should be
 Only two feet of earth, a hedge—
 Something that made them fit for Thee,
 Something that leaves us here below.

C. C. FRASER-TYTLER

AND there rests one, whom none on earth
 remember
 Except that heart whose fond life fed its own :
 The cherished babe, who through this bleak
 December,
 Far from the mother's bosom lieth lone,
 Where the cold north wind makes its wintry moan.

A bird whose song beyond the cloud is gone ;
A child whose empty cradle is bedewed
By bitter falling tears in hours of solitude.

Ah how can death untwist the cord of love,
Which bid those parted lives together cling ?
Prest to the bosom of that brooding dove,
Into those infant eyes would softly spring
A sense of happiness and cherishing ;
The tender lips knew no completed word,
The small feet could not run for tottering,
But a glad silent smile the red mouth stirred,
And murmurs of delight whene'er her name was
heard.

Oh ! darling, since all life for death is moulded,
And every cradled head some tomb must fill,
A little sooner only hast thou folded
Thy helpless hands, that struggled and are still :
A little sooner, thy Creator's will
Hath called thee to the life that shall endure :
And in that heaven, His gathered saints shall fill,
Hath made thy calling and election sure,
His work in thee being done, was thy death
premature ?

From "The Child of the Islands"
THE HON. MRS. NORTON

C RIMELESS and fearless that little mortal passed under the shadow, and explored the mystery of dissolution. There is death in its sublimest and purest image; no hatred, no hypocrisy, no suspicion, no care for the morrow, ever darkened the little one's face; death has come lovingly upon it; there is nothing cruel or harsh in its victory. The yearnings of love, indeed, cannot be stifled; for the prattle and smiles, and all the little world of thoughts that were so delightful, are gone for ever. Awe, too, will overcast us in its presence, for we are looking on death; but we do not fear for the little voyager; for the child has gone, simple, and trusting, into the presence of its All-wise Father; and of such is the kingdom of heaven.

LEIGH HUNT

THE WAY THE BABY SLEPT

THIS is the way the baby slept:
 T A mist of tresses backward thrown
 By quavering sighs where kisses crept
 With yearnings she had never known:
 The little hands were closely kept
 About a lily newly blown—
 And God was with her. And we wept.—
 And this is the way the baby slept.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

TO TWO BEREAVED

YOU must be sad ; for though it is to Heaven,
 'Tis hard to yield a little girl of seven.
Alas, for me 'tis hard my grief to rule,
Who only met her as she went to school ;
Who never heard the little lips so sweet
Say even "Good morning," though our eyes would
 meet
As whose would fain be friends ! How must you
 sigh,
Sick for your loss, when even so sad am I,
Who never clasp'd the small hand any day !
Fair flowers thrive round the little grave, I pray.

THOMAS ASHE

THE CHILD OF JAMES MELVILLE AND
THE TWO DOVES

ONE time my soul was pierced as with a
 sword,
Contending still with men untaught and wild,
When He to whom the prophet lent his gourd,
Gave me the solace of a little child.

A summer gift my precious child was given,
A very summer fragrance was its life ;
Its dear eyes soothed me as the blue of heaven,
When home I turned, a weary man of strife.

With unformed laughter, musically sweet,
How soon the wakening babe would meet my
kiss,
With outstretched arms its careworn father greet;
Oh ! in the desert what a spring was this.

A few short months it blossomed near my heart,
A few short months, else toilsome all and sad ;
But that home solace nerved me for my part,
And of the babe I was exceeding glad.

Alas ! my pretty bud, scarce formed, was dying ;
The prophet's gourd it withered in a night ;
And He who gave me, all my heart's pulse trying,
Took gently home the child of my delight.

Not rudely called, not suddenly it perished,
But gradual faded from our love away,
As if still secret dews its life that cherished,
Were drop by drop withheld, and day by day.

My gracious Master saved me from repining,
So tenderly He sued me for His own ;
So beautiful He made my babe's declining ;
Its dying blessed me, as its birth had done.

And daily to my board, at noon and even,
Our fading flower, I bade its mother bring,
That we might commune of our rest in Heaven ;
Gazing awhile at Death without its sting.

And of the ransome for that baby paid ;
So very sweet at times our converse seemed,
That the sure truth of grief, a gladness made ;
Our little lamb, by God's Own Lamb redeemed.

There were two milk white doves my wife had
nourished,
And I too loved, erewhile, at times to stand,
Marking, how each the other fondly cherished,
And fed them from my baby's dimpled hand.

So tame they grew, that, to his cradle flying,
Full oft they cooed him to his noon-tide rest ;
And to the murmurs of his sleep replying,
Crept gently in, and nestled in his breast.

'Twas a fair sight, the snow-pale infant sleeping,
So fondly guardianed by those creatures mild,
Watch o'er his closed eyes, their bright eyes
keeping ;
Wondrous the love betwixt the birds and child.

Still as he sickened, seemed the birds too, dwining,
Forsook their food and loathed their pretty play,
And on the day he died, with sad note pining,
One gentle bird would not be flayed away.

His mother found it, when she rose sad-hearted,
At early dawn, with sense of nearing ill,
And when at last the little spirit parted,
The dove died too, as if of its heart chill.

The other flew to meet my sad home-riding,
 As with a human sorrow in its coo,
 To my dead child, and its dead mate then guiding,
 Most pitifully plained and parted too.

It was my first hansel and propined to Heaven,
 And as I laid my darling 'neath the sod,
 Precious His comfort, once an infant given,
 And offered with two turtle doves to God.

JAMES MELVILLE

“ O H ! call my brother back to me !
 I cannot play alone ;
 The Summer comes with flower and bee—
 Where is my brother gone ?

“ The butterfly is glancing bright
 Across the sunbeam’s track,
 I care not now to chase its flight—
 Oh ! call my brother back !

“ The flowers run wild—the flowers we sow’d
 Around our garden tree ;
 Our vine is drooping with its load—
 Oh ! call him back to me ! ”

“ He would not hear thy voice, fair child,
 He may not come to thee ;
 The face that once like Spring-time, smiled,
 On earth no more thou’lt see.

“A rose’s brief, bright life of joy,
Such unto him was given;
Go—thou must play alone, my boy!
Thy brother is in heaven.”

“And has he left his birds and flowers;
And must I call in vain?
And through the long, long summer hours,
Will he not come again?

“And by the brook and in the glade
Are all our wanderings o’er?
Oh! while my brother with me played
Would I had loved him more!

MRS. HEMANS

THE ALPINE SHEEP

(ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND AFTER THE LOSS
OF A CHILD)

WHEN on my ear your loss was knelled,
And tender sympathy upburst,
A little spring from memory welled,
Which once had quenched my bitter thirst.

And I was fain to bear to you
A portion of its mild relief,
That it might be as healing dew,
To steal some fever from your grief.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of Death,
Like a long twilight haunting lay,

And friends came round, with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift remove,
The story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love.

They, in the valley's sheltering care,
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare,
The shepherd strives to make them climb

To airy shelves of pasture green,
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mist the sunbeams slide :

But nought can tempt the timid things
The steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie,

Till in his arms his lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go,
Then, heedless of the rifts and breaks,
They follow on o'er rock and snow.

And in the pastures, lifted fair,
More dewy-soft than lowland mead,

The shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed.

This parable, by Nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south-wind free
O'er frozen brooks, that flow unsheathed
From icy thraldom, to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night,
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the starry way,

Holding *our* little lamb asleep,—
While, like the murmur of the sea,
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, “Arise and follow me.”

MARIA LOWELL

GRAVES OF INFANTS

INFANTS’ gravemounds are steps of angels,
where
Earth’s brightest gems of innocence repose.
God is their parent, so they need no tear;
He takes them to his bosom from earth’s woes,
A bud their lifetime and a flower their close.
Their spirits are the Iris of the skies,
Needing no prayers; a sunset’s happy close.
Gone are the bright rays of their soft blue eyes;
Flowers weep in dew-drops o’er them, and the
gale gently sighs.

Their lives are nothing but a sunny shower,
Melting on flowers as tears melt from the eye.
Each death
Was tolled on flowers as summer gales went by
They bowed and trembled, yet they heaved no
 sigh,
And the sun smiled to show the end was well.
Infants have nought to weep for ere they die ;
All prayers are needless, beads they need not tell,
White flowers their mourners are, Nature their
passing bell.

JOHN CLARE

IT is no small advantage that our children receive if they die young ; for their condition of a blessed immortality is rendered to them secure by being snatched from the dangers of an evil choice, and carried to their little cells of felicity, where they can weep no more. And this the wisest of the Gentiles understood well, when they forbade any offerings or libations to be made for dead infants, as was usual for their other dead ; as believing they were entered into a secure possession, and which they went with no other condition but that they passed into it through the way of mortality, and for a few months wore an uneasy garment.

JEREMY TAYLOR

THE CHILD LOST

WHEN evening is closing in all round,
And winds in the dark-boughed timber
sound,
The flame of my candle, dazzling bright,
May shine full clear—full clear may shine,
But never can show my child to sight.

And warm is the bank where boughs are still,
On timber below the windward hill ;
But now, in the stead of summer hay,
Dead leaves are cast—are cast dead leaves,
Where lately I saw my child at play.

And oh ! could I see, as may be known
To angels, my little maid full grown,
As time would have made her, woman tall,
If she had lived—if lived had she
And not have died now, so young and small.

Do children that go to heaven play ?
Are young that were gay, in heaven gay ?
Are old people bow'd by weak'ning time,
In heaven bow'd—all bow'd in heaven ?
Or else are they all in blissful prime ?

Yes, blest with all blessings are the blest,
Their lowest of good's above our best :
So, show me the highest soul you can
In shape and mind—in mind and shape
Yet far above him is heaven's man.

W. BARNES

A LL our gaiety is vain,
 All our laughter is but pain :
 Lasting only and divine
 Is an innocence like thine.

ANON.

LITTLE BOY BLUE¹

THE little toy dog is covered with dust,
 But sturdy and stanch he stands ;
 And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
 And his musket moulds in his hands.
 Time was when the little toy dog was new,
 And the soldier was passing fair ;
 And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
 Kissed them and put them there.

“Now, don’t you go till I come,” he said,
 “And don’t you make any noise!”
 So, toddling off to his trundle-bed,
 He dreamt of the pretty toys ;
 And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
 Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
 Oh ! the years are many, the years are long,
 But the little toy friends are true !

Aye, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
 Each in the same old place—

¹ From “A Little Book of Western Verse”; copyright, 1889, by Eugene Field; published by Charles Scribner’s Sons.

Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
And the smile of a little face ;
And they wonder, as waiting the long years
through

In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

From "Lullaby Land"

EUGENE FIELD

HE is not dead—the child of our affection,—
But gone into that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ Himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air ;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her
For when with raptures wild

In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child :

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace ;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

From "Resignation"

H. W. LONGFELLOW

THE DEAD CHILD

(FROM THE ITALIAN OF A. VIVANTI)

HER wings are folded ; so we quite forgot
That she might fly away ;
So sweet she smiled on us, so glad her eyes,
We hoped the child on earth would stay,
Nor still yearn forth to Paradise.

Angel she seemed ; so how could we remember
That all things pass and die ?—
A child so tender, clinging to her own,
Who would have dreamt that she would fly,
Spread forth her wings to go alone ?

We loved her so ! But she, obedient,
Hearing the voice of God
That called her homeward to the distant shore,
Set forth upon the path untrod
And left us evermore !

ETHEL DE FONBLANQUE

THE MOTHER WHO DIED TOO

SHE was so little—little in her grave,
 The wide earth all around so hard and cold—
 She was so little ! therefore did I crave
 My arms might still her tender form enfold.
 She was so little, and her cry so weak
 When she among the heavenly children came—
 She was so little—I alone might speak
 For her who knew no word nor her own name.

EDITH MATILDA THOMAS

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL

THE snow had begun in the gloaming,
 And busily, all the night,
 Had been heaping field and highway
 With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
 Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
 And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
 Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with carrara
 Came Chanticleer's unruffled crow ;
 The stiff rails were softened to swans'-down ;
 And still wavered down the snow.

I stood and watched from my window
 The noiseless work of the sky,

And the sudden flurries of snow-birds
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood :
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did Robins the Babes in the Wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, " Father, who makes it snow ? "
And I told of a good All-Father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our buried woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
" The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can bid it fall ! "

Then with eyes that saw not I kissed her,
And she, kissing back, could not know
That my kiss was given to her sister
Folded close under deepening snow.

J. R. LOWELL

IN RAMA

A LITTLE face there was,
When all her pains were done,
Beside that face I loved :
They said it was a son.
A son to me—how strange !—
Who never was a man,
But lived from change to change
A boy, as I began.

More boyish still the hope
That leaped within me then,
That I, matured in him,
Should found a house of men ;
And all my wasted sheaves,
Bound up in his ripe shock,
Give seed to sterner times
And name to sterner stock.

He grew to that ideal,
And blossomed in my sight ;
Strange questions filled his day,
Sweet visions in the night,
Till he could walk with me,
Companion, hand in hand ;
But nothing seemed to be
Like him, in Wonder-land.

For he was leading me
 Beyond the bounds of mind,
 Far down Eternity,
 And I so far behind.
 One day an angel stepped
 Out of the idle sphere ;
 The man had entered in,
 The boy is weeping here.

My house is founded there
 In heaven that he has won.
 Shall I be outlawed, then,
 O Lord who hast my son ?
 This grief that makes me old,
 These tears that make me pure,
 They tell me time is time,
 And only heaven mature.

GEORGE ALFRED TOWNSEND

LISTEN ! God fashioned a House. He said,
 Build it with care :
 Then softly laid the soul of a maid
 To dwell in there.
 It grew, I say, as your lilies grow,
 Tender and tall,
 Till God smiled, "Now the house is too low
 For the child too small."
 And gently He shut the shutters one night,
 And closed the door.
 "More room and more light to walk upright
 On a Father's floor."

More room and more light for the maid, you know,
Only sixteen.

And in God's High Row, where Angels go,
She smiles between.

ANON.

LITTLE MATTIE

D EAD ! Thirteen a month ago !
Short and narrow her life's walk ;
Lover's love she could not know
Even by a dream or talk :
Too young to be glad of youth,
Missing honour, labour, rest,
And the warmth of a babe's mouth
At the blossom of her breast.
Must you pity her for this
And for all the loss it is,
You, her mother, with wet face,
Having had all in your case ?

Just so young but yesternight,
Now she is as old as death.
Meek, obedient in your sight,
Gentle to a beck or breath
Only on last Monday ! Yours,
Answering you like silver bells
Lightly touched ! An hour matures ;
You can teach her nothing else.
She has seen the mystery hid
Under Egypt's pyramid :

By those eyelids pale and close
Now she knows what Rhamses knows.

Cross her quiet hands, and smooth
Down her patient locks of silk,
Cold and passive as in truth
You your fingers in spilt milk
Drew along a marble floor ;
But her lips you cannot wring
Into saying a word more,
“Yes,” or “No,” or such a thing ;
Though you call and beg and wreak
Half your soul out in a shriek,
She will lie there in default
And most innocent revolt.

Ay, and if she spoke, may be
She would answer like the Son,
“What is now ‘twixt thee and me ? ”
Dreadful answer ! better none.
Yours on Monday, God’s to-day !
Yours, your child, your blood, your heart,
Called . . . you called her, did you say,
“Little Mattie,” for your part ?
Now already it sounds strange,
And you wonder, in this change,
What He calls His angel-creature,
Higher up than you can reach her.

’Twas a green and easy world
As she took it ; room to play,

(Though one's hair might get uncurled
At the far end of the day).

What she suffered she shook off
In the sunshine ; what she sinned
She could pray on high enough
To keep safe above the wind.
If reproved by God or you,
'Twas to better her, she knew ;
And if crossed, she gathered still
'Twas to cross out something ill.

You, you had the right, you thought
To survey her with sweet scorn,
Poor gay child, who had not caught
Yet the octave-stretch forlorn
Of your larger wisdom ! Nay,
Now your places are changed so,
In that same superior way
She regards you dull and low
As you did herself exempt
From life's sorrows. Grand contempt
Of the spirits risen awhile,
Who look back with such a smile !

There's the sting of't. That, I think,
Hurts the most a thousandfold !
To feel sudden, at a wink,
Some dear child we used to scold,
Praise, love both ways, kiss and tease,
Teach and tumble as our own,
All its curls about our knees,
Rise up suddenly full-grown.

Who could wonder such a sight
 Made a woman mad outright?
 Show me Michael with a sword
 Rather than such angels, Lord.

E. B. BROWNING

AN EPITAPH

UPON this world she did but look
 From the mere threshold and depart,
 Leaving, as an unopened book,
 The secrets of the soul and heart ;
 Passing away whilst yet the glow
 Of loveliness she did possess,
 Whilst still to love her was to show
 A love of youth and loveliness,
 And so ne'er knew that love can last
 When loveliness and youth are past.

From "The Song Book of Bethia Hardacre." ELLA FULLER MAITLAND

HESTER

WHEN maidens such as Hester die
 Their place ye may not well supply,
 Though ye among a thousand try
 With vain endeavour.
 A month or more hath she been dead,
 Yet cannot I by force be led
 To think upon the wormy bed
 And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate
That flush'd her spirit.

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call : if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool ;
But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind ;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour ! gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning—
When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet forewarning ?

C. LAMB

EVELYN HOPE

I

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !
 Sit and watch by her side an hour.
 That is her book-shelf, this is her bed :
 She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
 Beginning to die too, in the glass ;
 Little has yet been changed, I think :
 The shutters are shut, no light may pass
 Save two long rays thro' the hinge's chink.

II

Sixteen years old when she died !
 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name ;
 It was not her time to love ; beside,
 Her life had many a hope and aim,
 Duties enough and little cares,
 And now was quiet, now astir,
 Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
 And the sweet white brow is all of her.

III

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope ?
 What, your soul was pure and true,
 The good stars met in your horoscope,
 Made you of spirit, fire and dew—
 And, just because I was thrice as old
 And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
 Each was nought to each, must I be told ?
 We were fellow mortals, nought beside ?

IV

No, indeed ! For God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love :
I claim you still, for my own love's sake !
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few ;
Much is to learn, much to forget,
Ere the time be come for taking you.

V

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay ?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

VI

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes ;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me :
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !
What is the issue ? Let me see !

VII

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while.
My heart seemed full as it could hold ?
There was place and to spare for the frank young
smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young
gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep.
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand !
There, that is our secret : go to sleep !
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

ROBERT BROWNING

AND, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name ; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, and besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death : I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed ; and she shall live. And Jesus went with him ; and much people followed him, and thronged him. . . . While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead : why troublest thou the Master any further ? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he said unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And he

cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, “Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

ST. MARK, chap. v

AND I earnestly pray Thee, comfort those who have lost their children, giving mothers grace to be comforted though they are not; and grant us all faith to yield our dearest treasures unto Thee with joy and thanksgiving, that where with Thee our treasure is, there our hearts may be also. Thus may we look for and hasten unto the day of union with Thee, and of reunion. Amen.

From a Prayer of CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

INDEX OF AUTHORS

Alice, H.R.H. Princess, 66	Dickens, Charles, 131, 143
Andersen, Hans, 79	Drummond, William, 54
Anon., 158, 164	Drummond, Dr. William Henry, 115
Ashe, Thomas, 149	Dryden, John, 46
Barnes, William, 43, 57, 109, 157	Dunton, Theodore Watts, 106
Barrie, J. M., 17	Epitaphs, 27, 35, 43, 53, 67, 88, 102, 110, 135
Beaumont, Sir John, 2, 40	Evelyn, John, 8
Bridges, Robert, 3	Field, Eugene, 67, 158
Brown, Dr. John, 60, 96	Field, M. K., 117
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, 28, 70, 165	de Fonblanque, Ethel (Mrs. Harter), 160
Browning, Robert, 170	Gilder, Richard Watson, 98
Canton, William, 97, 135	Gwynn, Stephen L., 136
Carew, Thomas, 123	Hemans, Felicia, 152
Chesson, Norah (Norah Hopper), 41	Henry, Rev. Philip, 98
Clare, John, 155	Herrick, Robert, 30, 89
Coleridge, Hartley, 128	Hinkson, Katherine Tynan-, 34, 94
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 54, 118	
Coolidge, Susan, 76	
Cornwall, Barry, 48	

Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 126
 Hood, Thomas, 7
 Hunt, Leigh, 23, 39, 148
 Irving, Edward, 56
 Johnson, Rossiter, 107
 Jonson, Ben, 6, 45, 64
 Kingsley, Charles, 63
 Lamb, Charles, 21, 168
 Landor, Walter Savage, 35
 Lang, Andrew, 32, 76, 94, 115
 Leech, J., 31
 Leighton, Archbishop, 77
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 123, 159
 Lowell, James Russell, 36, 102, 133, 161
 Lowell, Maria, 120, 153
 Lytton, Robert, Earl of, 125
 F. I. L., 129
 Mackail, John W., 88, 126
 Maitland, Ella Fuller, 168
 Massey, Gerald, 50, 89, 104
 Melville, James, 149
 Miller, William, 69
 Milton, John, 101
 Moultrie, E., 138
 Muloch, Dinah (Mrs. Craik), 64, 105
 Murray, E. T., 103
 Noel, Hon. Roden, 78, 114
 Norton, Hon. Mrs., 146
 Palgrave, Francis Turner, 7, 60
 Riley, James Whitcomb, 32, 87, 112, 148
 Rossetti, Christina, 174
 Shakespeare, William, 7
 Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 33
 Smith, H. Bosworth, 140
 Southey, Mrs., 129
 Southey, Robert, 142
 Stanley, Arthur P., 119
 Stedman, Edmund Clarence, 46
 Stevenson, Robert Louis, 16
 Strettell, Alma (Mrs. Garrison), 91
 Strode, William, 55
 Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 12
 Taylor, Jeremy, 64, 156
 Tennyson, Alfred, 27
 Thackeray, William Makepeace, 4
 Thomas, Edith Matilda, 161
 Townsend, George Alfred, 163
 Tytler, Mrs. C. C. Fraser-, 144
 Vaughan, Henry, 21
 Verney, Sir Ralph, 51

LIST OF AUTHORS QUOTED 177

Watson, Rosamond Marriott, 58, 111.	Wither, George, 62.
Wesley, Charles, 97.	Wordsworth, William, 26, 122.
Winkworth, Catherine, 59.	Young, Edward, 141.



INDEX OF FIRST LINES

A child more welcome, by indulgent Heaven	142
After six fits of a quartan ague	8
A little face there was	163
A little rudely sculptured bed	76
A little soul scarce fledged for earth	12
All our gaiety is vain	158
And, behold	172
And I earnestly pray Thee	173
And Nathan departed	I
And there rests one, whom none on earth remember .	146
A poor mother sat watching	79
A Virgin blossom in her May	102
A vore the time when zuns went down	57
 Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead !	170
Because of little low-laid heads all crowned	117
Beneath, a sleeping infant lies	97
Be, rather than be called, a Child of God !	54
Blest infant bud, whose blossom-life	21
Buried to-day	105
But the first	27
But though the righteous	42
By November Lawrence	140
 Child of a day, thou knowest not	35
Children three I bore my own	32
Crimeless and fearless	148

Dead ! Thirteen a month ago !	165
Dear Lord, receive my son, whose winning love	2
Dear Sir ; I am in some little disorder	64
Ere Sin could blight, or sorrow fade	118
Farewell, thou child of my right hand and joy	5
Five years old. Five years ago	144
For she was dead	131
Friends of faces unknown and a land	28
God walked in heaven, on high, afar	97
Gone, gone from us ! and shall we see	36
Hades ! deaf to prayer and wail	94
Hail you sweet babes, that are the flowers	54
Has kindly Time made doon thy grief ?	69
He calls with quick, insistent cry	94
Heere lies a blossom of the worlds greate tree	53
Here lies, to each her parents' ruth	6
Here she lies, a pretty bud	31
Her hands are cold ; her face is white	126
Her voice was like the song of birds	98
Her wings are folded ; so we quite forgot	160
He talks to me that never had a son	7
Hither come, at close of day	48
I am glad of your health	77
I am soe full of grieve	51
I'd a dream to-night	109
If from your own the dimpled hands had slipped	87
If I could know	107
I had a little daughter	133
I have a little kinsman	46
I have a son, a third sweet son : his age I cannot tell	138
I know not where my darling moves	129
I'm sleepin' las' night w'en I dream a dream	115

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

181

Infants' gravemounds are steps of angels, where	155
In her eyes, her baby's face	96
In her seventh year this little maid	76
In the lustiness of youth	17
Into this world, as stranger to an Inn	35
I saw wherein the shroud did lurk	21
It is no small advantage	156
It was not, however, destined	4
 Jesus called	67
 Let me come in where you sit weeping—aye	32
Listen ! God fashioned a House. He said	164
Little eyes that scarce did see	7
“ Little Haly ! Little Haly ! ” cheeps the robin in the tree	112
 Many thanks for your dear letter !	66
Me Callimachus	126
My little baby was buried to-day	64
My little boy at Christmas-tide	114
My lost William, thou in whom	33
My mother was struck	60
 Not star or flower, but lovelier than these	41
“ Now lay me down ”	143
 O fairest flow'r no sooner blown but blasted	101
Of English blood, of Tuscan birth	70
Of gentle blood, his parents' only treasure	46
Of such I write, who show'd he would have been	40
“ Oh ! call my brother back to me ! ”	152
Oh, up the brae, and up and up, beyont the fairy thorn	136
One time my soul was pierced as with a sword	149
On summer nights, as days did gleam	43
Our leaves are shaken from the tree	104
Out of the house, where the slumberer lay	67

Perfect little body, without fault or stain on thee	3
Philip his father	88
Princess Anne	103
Pure sweet and fair, ere thou would'st taste of ill	60
Quite lost are now mine airy joys	62
She came to us in storm and snow	135
She is not dead—the child of our affection	159
She pass'd away, like morning dew	128
She was so little—little in her grave	161
Six months to six years added he remained	26
Sleep, little baby, sleep !	129
Strew violets about the floor	111
Such was the manner of her death	31
Tender Shepherd, Thou hast still'd	59
The Abbey	119
The child is in the night and rain	34
The cup of life just with her lips she prest	110
The first day	98
The little toy dog is covered with dust	158
The maid is not dead but sleepeth	43
The merry merry lark was up and singing	63
There are griefs so gentle	23
There is a Reaper, whose name is Death	123
The river went weeping, weeping !	91
The snow had begun in the gloaming	161
They say he is an angel now	125
They say the night has fallen chill	58
Thine was a blessed flight	135
This is the way the baby slept	148
This little vault, this narrow room	123
Thy tresses had not yet been shorn	115
To the gods of the Shades	28
To the memory of Penelope Boothby	88
Tread softly passenger for heere doethe lie	53

INDEX OF FIRST LINES 183

Underneath this greedy stone	39
Under the violets blue and sweet	141
Upon this world she did but look	168
Weep not because this childe hath dyed so young	55
Weep with me, all you that read	45
We wreathed about our darling's head	120
What beauty would have lovely styled	64
Whene'er there comes a little child	78
When evening is closing in all round	157
When Father Christmas went down Famine Street	106
When maidens such as Hester die	168
When on my ear your loss was knelled	153
Whoso studieth	56
Why, Madame, will ye longer weep	89
Why should we weep or mourn, angelic boy	122
Within a mile of Edinburgh town	89
With seeking hearts we still grope on	50
Yet, O, Stricken heart, remember, O remember	16
You must be sad ; for though it is to Heaven	149

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